ORDER IN THE FICTIONAL WORKS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN

WILLADEAN THORDIS LEO

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I declare that the thesis "Order in the Fictional Works of J.R.R. Tolkien" submitted to the University of Edinburgh for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is an original work composed only by myself and that no part of it has been included in any other piece of research submitted for previous degrees.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR PRIMARY SOURCES

MC...."Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics." 1936; rpt. in The "Beowulf" Poet, ed. Donald K. Fry. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1968.

H....The Hobbit; or, There and Back Again. 3rd ed. (unless otherwise stated). London: Unwin Books, 1966.

HBB...."The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son." 1953; rpt. in The Tolkien Reader. New York: Ballantine Books, 1966.

LN...."Leaf by Niggle." 1945; rpt. in Tree and Leaf. London: Unwin Books, 1964.

I, II and III....The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers and The Return of the King, being the three volumes of The Lord of the Rings. 2nd ed. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966. Where it will aid clarity, LR is used as an abbreviation for The Lord of the Rings as a whole.

OFS...."On Fairy-Stories." 1947; rev. and rpt. in Tree and Leaf. London: Unwin Books, 1964.

S....The Silmarillion. Ed. Christopher Reuel Tolkien. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1977.

Other works by Tolkien consulted and referred to:

The Adventures of Tom Bombadil. 1962; rpt. in The Tolkien Reader. New York: Ballantine Books, 1966.

"Farmer Giles of Ham." 1949; rpt. in The Tolkien Reader. New York: Ballantine Books, 1966.

The Hobbit; or, There and Back Again. 2nd ed. 1951; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961.

"Imram." Time and Tide, 36 (3 December 1955), 1561.

"The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun." Welsh Review, 4, No.4 (December 1945), 254-66.

"Ofermod." 1953; rpt. in The Tolkien Reader. New York: Ballantine Books, 1966.

The Road Goes Ever On: A Song Cycle, with music by Donald Swann. New York: Ballantine Books, 1967.

"Smith of Wootton Major." London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967.

ABSTRACT

J.R.R. Tolkien was strongly conscious of the importance of order, and order is a prominent force in his works. However, while in the past twenty-five years his writings, especially those fictional works dealing with his "secondary world" of "Arda", have been the subject of much critical commentary, the importance of order has not been comprehensively discussed. This thesis investigates the nature and function of order in Tolkien's major fictional works The Silmarillion, The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, with references to his critical writings and minor fictional works where relevant.

The introduction notes the importance of order to Tolkien as an individual in the "primary world" (this world), demonstrating some of the ways in which order and chaos were felt by Tolkien to operate in his own life. The second chapter, which begins the discussion of "Arda", shows that order originates with the Creator of the World. The development of chaos during the making of Arda and the nature of the world which results from the order-disorder struggle are examined. The five following chapters demonstrate the all-encompassing role of the order-chaos conflict which pervades and influences structures formed by the societies of Arda and the actions of their members. Chapter III investigates the connection between order and the concept of "heroism" as evident in the behaviour of individuals. The role of order in the relationships among the members of different social groups and among characters and the world around them is examined in the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters. The seventh chapter looks at the links between order and past history in Arda and traces the development of events under the influence of the two forces. The last chapter

concludes that Tolkien's characters, in their relationships with others and with their world, are agents of order in a way which differentiates them from traditional heroes of myth and fairy-story, a difference which is also evident in the stories of many fantasy writers working in the past quarter-century. The depiction of order in Tolkien's secondary world, especially as represented by the attitudes and actions of its inhabitants, is seen as a central and yet all-pervasive factor in his fictional writings.

Chapter I - Introduction

Although there has been much commentary on the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, especially over the last twenty-five years, few if any writers or critics have noted that the theme of world order is not only central to the works but extends throughout them in such a way as to permeate every aspect of the world depicted in them. For example, Randel Helms notes:

> fantasy literature is based on an aesthetic as demanding and uncompromising as any realism. The realistic writer must, to maintain his credibility, make clear (however implicitly) how his events could have happened, for realism stands upon an ontology that grants reality only on a basis of cause-and-effect sequences. Fantasy stands upon a different theory of reality, but one demanding with equal rigour that the fantasist keep always in mind his aesthetic principles: that what happens in his world accord not with his daydreams nor with our world's laws of common sense, but with the peculiar laws of the sub-created cosmos.[1]

Having put forward this premise, Helms goes on to discover five "internal laws" of Middle-earth, outline them, and demonstrate how closely Tolkien follows the "internal laws" of his secondary world, including, for example, the strictures that "the cosmos is providentially controlled" and "all experience is the realization of proverbial truth"[2] (meaning, essentially, that proverbs quoted and actions performed by the characters are closely related). Helms' discussion is thoughtful and perceptive as far as it goes, but he does not pursue, for instance, the "providential control" law very far. Paul H. Kocher examines "Cosmic Order," "Sauron and the Nature of Evil" and "The Free Peoples" in three chapters of his book,[3] discussing large and complex questions such as the relation between "free will" and

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1. Randel Helms, Tolkien's World (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), p.84.
2. Helms, p.86.
3. Paul H. Kocher, Master of Middle-Earth: The Fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972).

"providential control", the problem of individuality and possessiveness, and the relation between the different natures of the "good" characters and the nature of Middle-earth. However, his criticism also does not emphasize the fact that order is central to the secondary world and yet extends to every aspect of it. Deborah C. Rogers, focusing on "Everyclod" (the typical Hobbit) and "Everyhero"[4] (Aragorn) points out that Aragorn is out of his correct place for most of the story. Since Aragorn is one of the central figures it is reasonable for the reader to assume that if he is subject to a disordered situation then the rest of the secondary world is also. However, Rogers concentrates on Aragorn's problems and relations to order rather than widening her scope. Of these and other writers, no one seems to have realized, or at least stated, that the struggle for order is implicit or explicit in the background structures of the world as well as in the attitudes and actions of the characters who support or rebel against authority in the foreground.

A large part of the difficulty confronting Tolkien commentators and contributing to the lack of criticism on the subject of order, has been the absence of a published version of The Silmarillion. A brief examination of the history of the development of Tolkien's three major works - The Silmarillion, The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings - illustrates the significance of The Silmarillion. Moreover, such an examination also indicates the importance of the effects of "accumulation" in Tolkien's works (and is in part the result of the works' development), and why the reader, like those of the author's characters who are ignorant or comparatively inexperienced, must be alert to all seemingly casual references or implications so that the amassed information can eventually

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4. Deborah C. Rogers, "Everyclod and Everyhero: The Image of Man in Tolkien", in A Tolkien Compass, ed. Jared Lobdell (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing Co., 1975) pp.69-76.

be "collected" to provide a more complete view of the world in which the stories' events take place.

Tolkien's initial efforts at creating a mythology - a "sub-creation" or "secondary world" with its own history originally conceived of as an environment for some of the languages which Tolkien had been inventing since childhood - were embodied in the collection of stories which eventually came to form The Silmarillion (according to Humphrey Carpenter, the first tale was "The Fall of Gondolin", which was followed by the story of Túrin, the Beren-Lúthien episode, and the Creation myth, not necessarily in that order).[5] These stories developed and changed over a number of years, and as the world in which the narrated events took place expanded, it also became "'the world into which Mr. Baggins strayed'".[6] The Hobbit and his companions originally belonged to a world quite different from that of The Silmarillion, but the former were drawn into the latter by the author's dominant interest in his older mythology.[7] Upon being requested to write a sequel to The Hobbit, Tolkien began what grew into The Lord of the Rings. It began as another "Hobbit story" and was usually referred to as "the new Hobbit" both by Tolkien and those friends to whom he read parts of it aloud.[8] However, the second "Hobbit story" came even more under the influence of The Silmarillion than the first. Outlining the development of The Lord of the Rings, Carpenter notes: "Unconsciously, and usually without forethought, Tolkien was bending his tale away from the jolly style of The Hobbit towards something darker and grander, and closer in concept

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5. Humphrey Carpenter, J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977), pp.90,92,96,97-98. Hereafter cited as Carpenter.

6. Carpenter, p.178.

7. Carpenter, p.178.

8. Carpenter, p.192; and Humphrey Carpenter, The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, and their Friends (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1978), p.135. Hereafter cited as Inklings.

to The Silmarillion."[9] Tolkien himself acknowledged the power of The Silmarillion over his other imaginative concerns in a letter written to his publisher Stanley Unwin immediately before he began on The Lord of the Rings. After devoting some space to discussing and defending those sections of The Silmarillion seen by Unwin's reader, he turns to the ostensible main topic: "'I did not think any of the stuff I dropped on you filled the bill /for another "Hobbit story"/. But I did want to know whether any of the stuff had any exterior or non-personal value. I think it is plain that quite apart from it, a sequel or successor to The Hobbit is called for. I promise to give this thought and attention. But I am sure you will sympathize when I say that the construction of elaborate and consistent mythology (and two languages) rather occupies the mind, and the Silmarils are in my heart. So that goodness knows what will happen. Mr. Baggins began as a comic tale among conventional and

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9. Carpenter, p.186. Tolkien made some changes in The Hobbit in an attempt to make it more consistent with the other two works dealing with Middle-earth. For example, in the second edition, Gandalf explains about Thrain's map "slowly and crossly" (p.35); in the third he explains "slowly and grimly" (p.24). In the second edition Gandalf's smoke rings go green "with the joke" before hovering over his head: "He had quite a cloud of them about him already, and it made him look positively sorcerous" (p.22). In the third edition the smoke rings go green without a joke before hovering over the Wizard: "He had a cloud of them about him already, and in the dim light it made him look strange and sorcerous" (p.12). In the second edition the effect is that of magic touched with comedy, while in the third the two quoted descriptions of Gandalf work towards an impression of magic which is "other" and apart from Bilbo and the Dwarves, and is related to serious if unspecified matters. In the second edition Thror is killed "by a goblin" (p.33), but in the third he is killed by "Azog the Goblin" (p.24), who is mentioned again during the Battle of Five Armies (p.257). The intention in the third edition is to connect The Hobbit, through the agent of Thror's death, more closely to the Dwarves of The Lord of the Rings as detailed in the War of the Dwarves and Orcs (discussed in the appendices and referred to in the text). For information on stylistic changes in The Hobbit see Kevin Young, "The Hobbits", Mallorn, 10, pp.6-11 and Mallorn, 11, pp. 34-36; Jessica Kemball-Cook, "The Hobbit", Amon Hen, 22, pp.13-14 and Amon Hen, 23, pp.11-12; and Bonniejean M. Christensen, "Gollum's Character Transformation in The Hobbit" in A Tolkien Compass, pp.9-28. For Tolkien's own opinion on the style of The Hobbit see Carpenter, p.228, and Philip Norman, "The Hobbit Man", Sunday Times Magazine, 15 January 1967, pp.34-36.

inconsistent Grimm's fairy-tale dwarves, and got drawn into the edge of it - so that even Sauron the terrible peeped over the edge. And what more can hobbits do?'"[10] This is, in effect, a declaration of preference for the older Silmarillion over the less involved and involving Hobbit, although The Lord of the Rings eventually became a kind of synthesis of the two originally separate products of Tolkien's imagination.[11]

When the question of publishing The Lord of the Rings finally arose, Tolkien made extremely strenuous if ultimately futile efforts to have The Silmarillion released with it to make a complete history (with The Hobbit)[12] of his secondary world, which he called Arda. The process involved a quarrel with Unwin (virtually deliberate on Tolkien's part), a disappointment by Collins, and a return to Unwin, all of which delayed publication of The Lord of the Rings and did not bring The Silmarillion any closer to a general release.[13] When Tolkien finally wrote to Rayner Unwin he conceded defeat but expressed regret as well as resignation about the separation of the two books: "'I have rather modified my views. Better something than nothing! Although to me all are one, and The Lord of the Rings would be better far (and eased) as part of the whole, I would gladly

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10. Carpenter, p.185. Cf. the Foreword to The Lord of the Rings: "I went back to the sequel /of The Hobbit, after Unwin's unenthusiastic response to The Silmarillion stories/ .... But the story was drawn irresistibly towards the older world, and became an account...of its end and passing away before its beginning and middle had been told. The process had begun in the writing of The Hobbit...." (I, p.2).

11. Carpenter, pp.172, 188-89.

12. Although it is uncertain if Tolkien had, at the time, written all the material eventually published in The Silmarillion. For example, during the summer of 1966, he told Clyde S. Kilby "that he had 'recently' written 'The Wanderings of Húrin;' and that he was intending to complete "a full account of the Second Age of Middle-earth under the title of The Akallabeth...." See Clyde S. Kilby, Tolkien and "The Silmarillion" (Berkhamsted: Lion Publishing, 1977), pp.50, 23.

13. See Carpenter, pp.207-12.

consider the publication of any part of the stuff.'"[14]

The lack of The Silmarillion as a complement to Tolkien's other works was much felt, both by critics and the "general reader", during the twenty-two years between the publication of The Return of the King (1955) and The Silmarillion (1977). Books and articles appeared which proposed theories, ideas and explanations which, however ingenious or excellent, became subject to modification and revision at the least, or were totally invalidated, with the publication of The Silmarillion. (Occasionally the writers lamented the incompleteness of available information.)[15] On a somewhat wider scale, Tolkien received a multitude of letters with queries on the background of The Lord of the Rings and/or The Hobbit.[16] With the publication of The Silmarillion, any discussion of Tolkien's secondary world can now begin at the orderly beginning of that world and trace its history through three ages of struggle, rebellion and attempts to restore the original order, to the beginning of the "age" in which Tolkien's readers live. The cumulative information on the secondary world is valuable in that "'if it is possible to attain an internal knowledge of history, if we could grasp intuitively the principle that gives unity to an age or a culture, then history will take on an organic form, and we shall be able to see in all historic phenomena the expression of a moulding force behind the play of circumstances.'"[17]

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14. Carpenter, p.212.

15. See, for example, Kilby; Kocher; Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Power and Meaning in The Lord of the Rings" and Edmund Fuller, "The Lord of the Hobbits: J.R.R. Tolkien", both in Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), pp.81-99 and pp.17-39 respectively; W.B. Glover, "The Christian Character of Tolkien's Invented World", Criticism, 13 (Winter 1971), 39-53; and especially Charles Noad, The Trees, The Jewels and the Rings: A Discursive Enquiry into Things Little Known on Middle-Earth (Harrow: Tolkien Society, 1977).

16. See, for example, Carpenter, p.240; Daniel Grotta-Kurska, J.R.R. Tolkien: Architect of Middle Earth, ed. Frank Wilson (Philadelphia: Running Press, 1976), p.136; and Joy Hill, "Daily Life on Middle Earth", Bookseller, 3 August 1968, pp.374-75.

17. O. Spengler, quoted by Christopher Dawson, Progress and Religion: An Historical Enquiry (London: Shead and Ward, 1945), p.32.

The significance of order to Tolkien with regard to both the primary world and his secondary world cannot be overemphasized. In his own life, and despite his much-noted disorganization in his academic and other work (possibly attributable to his "laziness" or a simple lack of genuine organizational ability),[18] order and systemization were important to him. His desire for order was perhaps due to his early loss of both parents and the frequent house-movings and general unsettlement of his childhood; he was especially affected by the transition from the village Sarehole, where he lived from the ages of four to eight, to Birmingham.[19] These factors left him with a capacity to experience "bouts of profound despair.... when he was in this mood he had a deep sense of impending loss. Nothing was safe. Nothing would last. No battle would be won for ever."[20] Considering these circumstances, it is probable he was also left with a wish to make those areas of his life under his own control as secure as possible, and therefore valued those relationships or social structures of which a definite hierarchy or an organization with clearly stated rules, obligations and responsibilities, were intrinsic parts. Therefore, he approved of the class system, for example, because by using it as a base he knew exactly where he "belonged" and where others belonged, both in relation to himself and the world in general: "he /was not/ without consciousness of class: the very opposite was true. But it was precisely

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18. For comments by Tolkien and others on this tendency, see, for example, Clive Staples Lewis, Letters of C.S. Lewis, ed. W.H. Lewis (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), p.222; Bill Cater, "The Filial Duty of Christopher Tolkien", Sunday Times Magazine, 25 September 1977, pp.61, 63; Charlotte and Denis Plimmer, "The Man Who Understands Hobbits", Daily Telegraph Magazine, 181 (22 March 1968), 31-32, 35; and Carpenter, pp.237, 240-41, 251-52.

19. See Carpenter, II, chapters 2-3.

20. Carpenter, p.31.

because of his certainty of his own station in life that there was about him nothing of intellectual or social conceit. His view of the world, in which each man belonged to or ought to belong to a specific 'estate', whether high or low, meant that in one sense he was an old-fashioned conservative. But in another sense it made him highly sympathetic to his fellow-men, for it is those who are unsure of their status in the world, who feel they have to prove themselves and if necessary put down other men to do so, who are the truly ruthless."[21] An established order, according to Tolkien, prevents, or at least reduces, social tension and friction among individuals, and promotes harmony in relationships. His interest in languages, both professionally and as an amusement, was based at least partly on an appreciation of the order which belongs to linguistics and philology.[22] The endless revision to which he subjected The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings and The Silmarillion was partly due to a passion for internal consistency and coherence according to the order of the secondary world's background.[23] Even his fondness for the card game Patience implies a concern with order.[24]

Perhaps the most important indication of Tolkien's concern with order in the primary world is focused in his attitude towards God and religion. Tolkien's feeling for Roman Catholicism meant that he strongly adhered to traditional and long-established rites and practices governed by certain rituals: "He thought that the sacraments were by far the most important

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21. Carpenter, pp.127-28.

22. See Carpenter, especially II, chapters 2,3 and 5, and IV, chapter 3.

23. See, for example, Carpenter, pp.227-28, 251-52; and Cater.

24. Carpenter, pp.95, 240.

part of a Christian's life. He did not believe that interpretation of Christianity was the crucial thing; what was required (in his view) was regular attendance at Mass, with Communion taken only after a preparatory Confession; and this, together with private prayer, was the centre of his spiritual life."[25] He disliked any disruption of the order traditionally a part of his religion: Carpenter remarks that one "source of unhappiness in his last years was the introduction of the vernacular mass, for the use of English in the liturgy rather than the Latin he had known and loved since boyhood pained him deeply."[26]

When closely examined, Tolkien's secondary world can be seen to demonstrate the kind of order he preferred and wished to see maintained (or re-established) in the primary world. His sub-creation is a reflection or re-creation both of the original or pre-lapsarian orderly world (seen, for example, in the depiction of Aman the Blessed)[27] and of the England of the fallen world which had existed (or Tolkien believed had existed) while he was growing up, and which had been a place wherein a certain order had reigned despite the chaos of his personal circumstances. This view of England can be seen in the presentation of the Shire, "a district of well-ordered business; and there in that pleasant corner of the world they /Hobbits, who have been identified as 'typical Englishmen' both by Tolkien and others/[28] plied their well-ordered business of living"

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25. Inklings, p.154.

26. Carpenter, p.128.

27. That is, during the time that Melkor is still imprisoned in the Halls of Mandos, and before Fëanor begins agitating the Elves, although strictly speaking, a pre-lapsarian order could be said to exist only before Melkor gets out his place during the Great Music. Aman is also "Heaven" and in that sense those who go there enter (or return to) a place of divine order.

28. For the identification of Hobbits as "Englishmen", by Tolkien and others, see, for example, Carpenter, pp.175-76; Rogers; Matthew Hodgart, "Kicking the Hobbit", New York Review of Books, 8 (4 May 1967), 10-11; and Gerald M. Garmon, "J.R.R. Tolkien's Modern Fairyland", West Georgia College Review, 6 (1973), 10-15.

(I, p.14). The Shire, modelled on the village Sarehole where Tolkien spent his happiest childhood years,[29] was recognized by its (re) creator as being transitory: "To Tolkien, both Sarehole and the Shire had been 'tucked away from all the centres of disturbance,' and had come 'to be regarded as divinely protected, though people didn't realize it at the time. That's how England used to be, isn't it?' But, according to Tolkien, 'behind all this hobbit stuff lay a sense of insecurity. I always knew it would go away, and it did.'"[30]

The combination of Tolkien's wish for order, his faith in God, and his pessimism and sense of insecurity in the face of a constantly changing and (to his mind) increasingly disorderly fallen primary world, can be seen as contributing in a variety of complex ways to the making of his secondary world. Tolkien believed that the artist or story-teller was allowed by God to catch glimpses of the ultimate truth, and that all secondary worlds were revelations or possible versions of the true order or the "real" world: "Probably every writer making a secondary world, a fantasy, every sub-creator, wishes in some measure to be a real maker, or hopes that he is drawing on reality: hopes that the peculiar quality of this secondary world (if not all the details) are derived from Reality, or are flowing into it. If he indeed achieves a quality that can fairly be described by the dictionary definition: 'inner consistency of reality', it is difficult to conceive how this can be, if the work does not in some way partake of reality" (OFS, pp.61-62). In view of his own tastes and preferences, it is hardly surprising that Tolkien goes on to indicate that fairy-stories (such as his own) are the best artistic expressions of the

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29. Carpenter, p.176.

30. Quoted by Norman, p.36.

glimpses of Reality allowed to artists:[31]

> That peculiar quality of the "joy" in successful Fantasy can thus be explained as a sudden glimpse of the underlying reality or truth. It is not only a "consolation" for the sorrow of this world, but a satisfaction, and an answer to that question, "Is it true?" The answer to this question that I gave at first was (quite rightly): "If you have built your little world well, yes: it is true in that world." That is enough for the artist (or the artist part of the artist). But in the "eucatastrophe"[32] we see in a brief vision that the answer may be greater - it may be a far-off gleam or echo of evangelium in the real world.
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> (OFS, p.62)

It is for this reason that Carpenter notes: "When he wrote The Silmarillion Tolkien believed that in one sense he was writing the truth. He did not suppose that precisely such peoples as he described, 'elves', 'dwarves', and malevolent 'orcs', had walked the earth and done the deeds that he

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31. It is also, according to Tolkien, a particularly difficult kind of expression to achieve successfully (OFS, p.45), an opinion which echoes those of some other critics. H. Rider Haggard, for example, wrote "... with the exception of perfect sculpture, really good romance writing is perhaps the most difficult art practised by the sons of men." Another (anonymous) writer stated that the force of the "romantic" author's imagination makes him a greater writer than the realistic author, and adds "A novel, therefore, in which imagination predominates, and realism is not wanting, would, by this combination, merit the highest rank." These opinions are quoted by Kenneth Graham, English Criticism of the Novel 1865-1900 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965), pp.65, 62-63.

32. Tolkien defines this term as "the Happy Ending" and assigns much importance to it: "The eucatastrophic tale is the true form of fairy-tale, and its highest function" (OFS, p.60). In his view, the story of the Gospels is an eucatastrophic fairy-story. For another opinion on the psychological value of "the happy ending" in fairy-tales, see Bruno Bettelheim, The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales (New York: Vintage Books, 1977). For other viewpoints on "sehnsucht" as connected with fairy-story/myth/romance, see, for example, Robert Louis Stevenson, "A Gossip on Romance", Longman's Magazine, 1 (1882-83), 69-79 (quoted in Graham, p.65); and Clive Staples Lewis, Of Other Worlds: Essays and Stories, ed. Walter Hooper (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), especially "On Stories" (pp.3-21) and "On Science Fiction" (pp.59-73); also the "discussion" in Inklings, pp.143-44. For a different viewpoint, see Eric Rücker Eddison's introduction to his A Fish Dinner in Memison (1941, rpt., New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), pp.xvii-xxix.

recorded. But he did feel, or hope, that his stories were in some sense an embodiment of a profound truth."[33] Describing the tales of The Silmarillion, Tolkien wrote: "'They arose in my mind as "given"[34] things, and as they came, separately, so too the links grew .... always I had the sense of recording what was already "there", somewhere: not of inventing.'"[35] In other words, the stories, which come from God, have already been ordered by the Primary Creator who has made and makes all things. It is the task of the sub-creator to discover, in so far as he is able and allowed, the original order of the stories and to express them in a form as close to the original as possible (Tolkien goes on to admit that in any story "all the details may not be 'true': it is seldom that the 'inspiration' is so strong and lasting that it leavens all the lump, and does not leave much that is mere uninspired 'invention'"/OFS, p.62.). Christopher Tolkien notes that, discussing his writing, his father "often spoke as if the solution to a problem could best be found by penetrating more deeply into the matter, as if some contradiction could best be resolved in terms of what was already known - far more rarely did he treat his work autocratically, saying 'This won't do' or 'I must get rid of that'."[36] This attitude can be interpreted as

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33. Carpenter, p.91.

34. It seems certain that "given" is meant quite literally: that is, given by God. Kilby records that on one occasion Tolkien told him "a Member of Parliament had...declared, 'You did not write The Lord of the Rings,' meaning that it had been given him from God. It was clear that he favoured this remark" (p.13).

35. Carpenter, p.92.

36. Christopher Tolkien, "The History of The Silmarillion", "Fanfare", The Globe and Mail (Toronto), 14 September 1977, pp.10-11. Cf. also Carpenter's account of Tolkien's struggles to "direct" The Lord of the Rings (pp.186-88), the introduction to Tree and Leaf (p.5), and the description of the War of the Ring as one "which it was my task to conduct, or at least to report" (Foreword, I, p.3; emphasis added). Tolkien wrote to Father Robert Murray, "'I have consciously planned very little; and should chiefly be grateful for having been brought up ... in a faith that has nourished me and taught me all the little I know....'" See Robert Murray, "A Tribute to Tolkien", The Tablet, 227, No.6950 (15 September 1973), p.880. The artist's relationship with God was an intensely interesting subject to the Inklings. See Inklings, p.138, and C.S. Lewis, "On Three Ways of Writing for Children", Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said", and "It All Began with a Picture...", pp.22-34,35-38, and 42 respectively, in Of Other Worlds: Essays and Stories.

indicative of Tolkien's unwillingness to "rebel" against the already-established order of his stories, an order originating with God.

By expressing, as he hoped, glimpses of the ultimate reality through his sub-creating, Tolkien was also doing what he could to express his faith in God and to demonstrate the relationship between God, true order, and man. In fact, he thought that it was for this purpose that man has artistic inclinations and abilities,[37] so that artists may reveal, in a suitable way, part of the truth which is expressed in and by the Gospels: "It has long been my feeling... that God redeemed the corrupt making-creatures, men, in a way fitting to this aspect, as to others, of their strange nature" (OFS, p.62). According to this theory, stories and myths which come from God appeal to man because he is striving to see the truth and return to God, the orderly source of all things. The longing for "Heaven" or "Paradise" is a longing for the true order.[38]

Through catching glimpses of the "true" order or "underlying reality" and striving to communicate them to others through his work, the artist conveys a vision which promotes "recovery". Tolkien defines this term: "Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a re-gaining - regaining of a clear view. I do not say 'seeing things as they are' and

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37. Tolkien's preference for the revelation of "reality" through the writing of fairy-stories (cf. OFS, p.48) did not prevent him from acknowledging that "Faërie" or visions of "reality" could also be detected through the media of, for example, painting or drawing (both activities he indulged in himself), in singing, or even such apparently non-artistic "making" as smith-work. See his short stories "Leaf by Niggle" and "Smith of Wootton Major". Lewis also believed in the supremacy of literary sub-creation (see note 47 below), but used the example of painting to make his point in The Great Divorce: A Dream (1946; rpt. London: Fontana Books, 1972), pp.72-76.

38. See Carpenter, p.147. Cf. the movement of Men westwards, towards Aman, in The Silmarillion.

involve myself with the philosophers, though I might venture to say 'seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them' - as things apart from ourselves" (OFS, p.52). "Recovery" described thus would seem to mean a re-gaining of one's original view, the view held by the observer as a child. The child, as a stranger or newcomer to the world holding (at the outset) no possessions, sees the world as an unknown place and must discover what it is and what is in it. The child, according to the traditional Romantic view with which Tolkien agreed (in this respect cf. his description of his son Christopher as "'what God has sent'"),[39] would know what the "underlying reality or truth" is, a perception which is lost or distorted as the child grows older, gains possessions, and moves farther away from his "divine" original dwelling place. As he becomes more and more familiar with the fallen world, the child becomes, appropriately (if, in this case, regrettably) more like his environment. In not seeing things as we are "meant to see them", we, and the world, are, so to speak, under an evil spell (because we are fallen). As G.K. Chesterton puts it:

> The wonder-working done by good people, saints and friends of man, is almost always represented in the form of restoring things or people to their proper shapes.... I do not say there are no exceptions; but this is the general tone of the tales about good magic. But, on the other hand, the popular tales about bad magic are specially full of the idea that evil alters and destroys the personality. The black witch turns a child into a cat or a dog; the bad magician keeps the Prince captive in the form of a parrot, or the Princess in the form of a hind; in the gardens of the evil spirits human beings are frozen into statues or tied to the earth as trees. In all such instinctive literature the denial of identity is the very signature of Satan. In that sense it is true that the true God is the God of things as they are -

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39. Carpenter, p.108. The attitude towards the child as a gift from God is, of course, Christian as well as "Romantic".

or, at least, as they were meant to be.[40]

Similarly, the Opies state: "The transformation /in a fairy-tale/ is not an actual transformation but a disenchantment, the breaking of a spell. In each case we are aware that the person was always noble, that the magic has wrought no change in the person's soul, only in his or her outward form."[41] According to Tolkien, "This recovery /of a clear view of the world/ fairy-stories help us to make. In that sense only a taste for them may make us, or keep us, childish" (OFS, p.52).

Through his own fairy-stories, or myths, Tolkien hoped to convey some part of the underlying reality in which all things are separate, individual and complete in themselves, and yet join together to make a coherent and unified whole through an acknowledged order. An apprehension of this reality could (he believed) be encouraged or assisted through a "re-seeing" of the reality of this world, using fairy-stories as an agency which would operate in the same way (if on a different scale) as the Gospels.[42] As Carpenter puts it: "He wanted the mythological and legendary stories to express his own moral view of the universe,"[43] believing that "just as speech is invention about objects and ideas, so myth is invention about truth."[44] He explained to an interviewer: "'mythology moves me and also

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40. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, "Wishes", in The Uses of Diversity: A Book of Essays, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen and Co., 1920), pp.77-78.

41. The Classic Fairy Tales, ed. Iona and Peter Opie (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p.14.

42. Cf. "there is... the belief shared by Tolkien and Lewis that myth can sometimes convey truth in a way that no abstract argument can achieve: a very important notion behind both men's work, and an idea that was certainly shared in some degree by Williams" (Inklings, pp.156-57).

43. Carpenter, p.91.

44. Carpenter, p.147.

upsets me because most mythology is distasteful to people. But it seems to me that we miss something by not having a mythology which we can bring up to our own grade of assessment.[45] That's what I always wanted to do - mythological things like Greek or Norse; I tried to make them credible.'"[46] This aim is part of the belief that to read or write a fairy-story involving "sub-creation" is an action directed towards a return to God: "Fantasy remains a human right: we make in our measure and in our derivative mode, because we are made: and not only made, but made in the image and likeness of a Maker" (OFS, p.50).[47] To make fantasy is not only to exercise a right, but to obey a law which had a role in the original creation of human nature (cf. "That right has not decayed:/we make still by the law in which we are made", OFS, p.49). By proposing a secondary world based on and demonstrating "correct" or God-endorsed values which (presumably) operate in the "underlying reality" and would operate in an unfallen world, Tolkien hoped to promote a re-evaluation of and possible return to those values in the fallen primary world.[48]

For a writer to say, in effect, that he himself is really not the

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45. Presumably this statement means that we cannot assess mythology properly because we do not understand it properly, and it must therefore be transformed or "translated" for us. Cf. Owen Barfield's Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning (London: Faber and Gwyer, 1928), a book Tolkien read and admired (Inklings, p.42).

46. Quoted by G. Monsman, "The Imaginary World of J.R.R. Tolkien", South Atlantic Quarterly, 69 (Spring 1970), p.265.

47. Cf. Aulë's justification of his making of the Dwarves (S, p.43). Lewis once exasperated John Wain by declaring "that, since the Creator had seen fit to build a universe and set it in motion, it was the duty of the human artist to create as lavishly as possible in his turn. The Romancer, who invents a whole world, is worshipping God more effectively than the mere realist who analyzes that which is about him." Wain himself felt that this contention was "absurd". See John Wain, Sprightly Running: Part of an Autobiography (London: Macmillan & Co., 1962), p.182

48. See Wain, p.181, and Inklings, pp.159-60, for comments on this attitude.

maker of his own stories, and to attribute to his god not only creation of the primary world, but (virtually) creation of all secondary worlds as well, is a strong indication of how intensive and extensive he believes the power of the deity to be. In Tolkien's case the longing and respect for an undeniable authority, an unambiguous chain of command and obedience with responsibilities and duties clearly outlined, and the consequent security of such an order, is emphasized both in his own life and in his sub-creation.[49] In his actions and relationships in the primary world he strongly advocated an externally imposed order, such as the monarchy, hereditary aristocracy, and the customs and traditions of the Catholic church and religion. He did not rebel against a legitimate and acknowledged authority even when he chafed under its restraints. This is especially notable in his behaviour during the period when his guardian forbade him to communicate with Edith Bratt (this seems to be the only major occasion in Tolkien's life on which he seriously wished to go against the ruling of the established authority). Carpenter, anticipating the possible bewilderment of readers less impressed with authority than Tolkien, explains "It may seem strange that Ronald did not simply disobey Father Francis and openly continue the romance. But the social conventions of the time demanded that young people should obey their parent or guardian; moreover Ronald had great affection for Father Francis, and depended on him for money. Nor was he a rebellious young man. Given all this, it is scarcely remarkable that he agreed to do as he was told."[50] He apparently did not think the prohibition unjust, tyrannical, or even unreasonable, and

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49. Cf. the illustration of a chalice being used by evil magicians which is employed by Tolkien in the conversation reconstructed by Carpenter: "'It would be your business simply to reverence it, and what the magicians did to it afterwards would be theirs'" (Inklings, p.147).

50. Carpenter, pp.41-42.

accepted the situation on the grounds that "'I owe all to Fr. F and so must obey.'"[51] Regard for social convention, the prompting of affection, acknowledgment of a debt and the authority's consequent right to exact obedience in "payment" of the debt, and the lack of a rebellious element in his character which urged him to agree "to do as he was told", all operated to preserve Tolkien from any serious breach of the rules. There is no doubt that he was always conscious of the results of the rebellious disobedience of Adam and Eve towards the authority of God the Father. The original Fall and its consequences, to him, explained much of the disagreeable part of life (up to and including the more aggravating aspects of marital relationships), and are strongly evident in his writings.[52]

Tolkien had no great faith in the ability of people to rule themselves: "Tolkien was, in modern jargon, 'right-wing' in that he honoured his monarch and his country and did not believe in the rule of the people; but he opposed democracy simply because he believed that in the end his fellow-men would not benefit from it. He once wrote: 'I am not a "democrat", if only because "humility" and equality are spiritual principles corrupted by the attempt to mechanize and formalize them, with the result that we

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51. Carpenter, p.43. Cf. "those who will defend authority against rebellion must not themselves rebel" (S, p.66). It is worth noting that Tolkien's reasons, as given by Carpenter, for Tolkien's obedience of Father Francis' prohibition are the same as those offered by Kocher (pp.137-38) for Aragorn's behaviour during his engagement to Arwen.

52. "It /The Silmarillion/ is in many ways a despairing view /of existence/. As a Catholic, Tolkien believed devoutly in the Fall of Man and original sin, but one does not realise quite how far fallen he considered Man to be until one reads The Silmarillion." Humphrey Carpenter, "Tolkien's Return", The Financial Times, 15 September 1977 , p.35. See also Carpenter, pp.156-57, and Inklings, p.140.

get not universal smallness and humility, but universal greatness and pride, till some Orc gets hold of a ring of power - and then we get and are getting slavery.'"[53] A system whereby everyone's role in life was dictated, at least in fundamentals, by an unquestioning acceptance of an unquestionable, externally imposed order, reduced the possibility of error or disaster, and heightened the possibility of security and of harmonious relationships with other people and the world in general. Moreover, when the authority is an omniscient, omnipotent deity, there remains the potential for correction and/or salvation even when an error is committed or a disaster imminent, whether in an intensely personal situation such as eternal life after the "error" of death (which is the result of the disastrous error of Adam and Eve in not accepting God's authority) or, theoretically, a situation which affects the entire world, such as is found in the Númenorean invasion of Aman or the possible triumph of Morgoth at the end of the First Age in Tolkien's own writings. And, in acknowledgment of the authority's power, the dependent's obedience, and their mutual responsibilities, it is right and proper that fitting marks of respect are offered, such as the formal ceremonies of worship in church or "'Touching your cap to the Squire'", which, Tolkien thought, "'may be damn bad for the Squire but it's damn good for you.'"[54]

Given Tolkien's wish to convey truth through his sub-creation and his belief that he was doing so, his strong faith in God and the Roman Catholic religion, and the importance he attached to authority and the regularity, decorum and security which he regarded as part of an authoritarian structure both in spiritual and secular matters, his writings are much concerned with

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53. Carpenter, p.128.

54. Carpenter, p.128.

order and the manifestations of order.[55] This is true not only in those works which deal with "Arda", the secondary world in which The Silmarillion, The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings are set, but also of his other works. The critical essays "On Fairy-Stories", "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" and "Ofermod" (which deals with "The Battle of Maldon") are much concerned with various facets of order in the works which they discuss. Moreover, Tolkien's short stories "Leaf by Niggle", "Smith of Wootton Major" and "Farmer Giles of Ham", the poems "The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun" and "Imram", and the poem/play "The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son", have order as an important theme. These works will be referred to where relevant. In the following pages an attempt will be made to show that order, proceeding ultimately from the Creator, informs all aspects of Tolkien's sub-creation "Arda", even if the inhabitants of the secondary world are not always aware of it and do not always recognize its all-pervasive presence.

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55. It is not too much to say that Tolkien wished to exercise or be an authority himself, and enjoyed this aspect of his role as sub-creator, although not forgetting his beliefs about the dominant role of the Creator. His authoritarianism as evidenced in his work is noted by, for example, Colin Wilson, Tree by Tolkien (London: Village Press, 1974), p.28; and Hodgart, who also, not surprisingly, detects the tendency in Lewis.

Chapter II - The Relationship between Order and the Structure of "Arda"

J.R.R. Tolkien's "creation myth" is found in "Ainulindalë" in The Silmarillion. "Ainulindalë" ("The Music of the Ainur") tells the story of the creation of Arda (the world) according to the Great Music of the Ainur (the "angels" or holy powers brought into being by the Creator). In the Music the world is "foreshadowed and foresung" (S, p.20) in a pattern proposed by Eru (the Creator, also called Ilúvatar), to which the Ainur build and establish it. Therefore, the world reflects the Music. Because music, in order to be music, has a certain order, and the Great Music dictates what the world will be, the world also has an order. There is a specific relation between the nature of the Great Music and the nature of Arda because the former establishes the latter.

In addition to establishing the world and its nature, the Music also decrees the "fate" or "doom" or "destiny" of Arda and its inhabitants because its fate develops partly out of the nature of the world as sung in the Music. Arda is a deterministic world in that the historical events which are "foresung" are laid out in advance under a central control. This central control is not the Ainur, who sing according to Ilúvatar's design: "Ilúvatar called together all the Ainur and declared to them a mighty theme, unfolding to them things greater and more wonderful than he had yet revealed" (S, p.15). Therefore the Ainur are not entirely responsible for the Music and do not completely understand it, especially since they are not initially aware that the performance has any motive or meaning beyond pleasure and beauty: "because of the memory of his words, and the knowledge that each has of the music that he himself made, the Ainur know much of what was, and is, and is to come,

and few things are unseen by them. Yet some things there are that they cannot see, neither alone nor taking counsel together; for to none but himself has Ilúvatar revealed all that he has in store.... they perceived that they themselves in the labour of their music had been busy with the preparation of this dwelling /the world/, and yet knew not that it had any purpose beyond its own beauty" (S, pp.17-18). Moreover, the Music's power is not all-inclusive: "nor was all foretold in the Music of the Ainur" (S, p.105). More specifically, "in every age there come forth things that are new and have no foretelling, for they do not proceed from the past" (S, p.18); and the fate of Men as a race and as individuals is outside the Music's control.

After pondering the matter for an age, Eru decrees that the Elves "'shall have the greater bliss in this world. But to the Atani /Men/ I will give a new gift.' Therefore he willed that the hearts of Men should seek beyond the world and should find no rest therein; but they should have a virtue to shape their life, amid the powers and chances of the world, beyond the Music of the Ainur, which is as fate to all things else..." (S, p.41). The Ainur love the Children of Ilúvatar (Elves and Men) because "none of the Ainur had part in their making. Therefore when they beheld them, the more did they love them, being things other than themselves, strange and free, wherein they saw the mind of Ilúvatar reflected anew" (S, p.18). However, the Ainur understand the Elves better "for Ilúvatar made them more like in nature to the Ainur " (S, p.41), while Men are more alien because they are not bound by the Music as the Ainur are, because they die "unnaturally" and because of their ambition. Due to this Eru-given tendency, "the Elves believe that Men are often a grief to Manwë /the King of the Ainur/, who knows most of the mind of Ilúvatar; for it seems to the Elves that

Men resemble Melkor [the fallen or Satanic Ainu] most of all the Ainur" (S, p.42; it must be remembered that the Ainur do not know all of Eru's intention or his purposes in giving Men the gifts he does). While death is the inevitable end of all Men in Middle-earth, they are free within their lives to create their own destinies in a way that no other race is, and for this reason they are ultimately baffling to all other races, although the relationship of cause and effect is not suspended. Moreover, they, like every other part of Eru's whole, are ultimately under his control in that he knows and decides what actions they will take and they are not outside his rule. Even in death their fate is separate from those of others: Elves and Dwarves both go to the Halls of Mandos, but no one, including the Ainur, knows where Men go after death (the destinations of dead Ents, Hobbits and Orcs, as well as ordinary animals, are nowhere speculated on or discussed). It is humans (Beren, Tuor), part-humans (Eärendil, Elwing, Elros, Elrond and his three children) or those who have been significantly affected by or are related to humans (Lúthien, Bilbo, Frodo, Sam) who require "special treatment" with regard to their ultimate fates. Human ambition enables Men to achieve goals which seem to be hopeless, and their comparative freedom and ambitions when achieved often have repercussions on those around them. This combination of factors can create situations in which standard treatment or solutions do not apply, and new answers must be found.

This is not to say that humans' fates are not subject to a certain amount of manipulation by the Valar or Eru. Often a crucial action is taken by a human because an external power has provided a starting point or protection. Beren, one of the great heroes of the First Age, is "defended by fate" (S, p.164) when he attacks the Orcs, and when he

is eventually forced out of Dorthonion by Morgoth's encroachments, "it was put into his heart that he would go down into the Hidden Kingdom /the stronghold of Thingol's Elves/ where no mortal foot had trodden" (S, p.164). He achieves his goal because "a great doom lay upon him" (S, p.165). Confronting the hostile Thingol, he is initially dumb with fear, but he looks first at Lúthien and then at Melian "and it seemed to him that words were put into his mouth" (S, p.166). He acknowledges the role of an external power by telling Thingol "'My fate, O King, led me hither'" (S, p.166) and Melian, one of the Ainur, also recognizes that a power beyond Elves or Men is at work when she warns her husband "'far and free does his fate lead him in the end'" (S, p.167).

Similarly, Tuor, another hero of the First Age, is affected by an external force: "Ulmo set it in his heart to depart from the land of his fathers, for he had chosen Tuor as the instrument of his designs" (S, p.238). Ulmo also saves Voronwë alone of Turgon's mariners solely for Tuor's benefit so that the latter will have a guide to Turgon's realm of Gondolin, and the two reach the city "by the power that Ulmo set upon them" (S, p.239). When Elrond and Aragorn first discuss the latter's attachment to Arwen, he also recognizes the role of the controlling authority: "'I see,' said Aragorn, 'that I have turned my eyes to a treasure no less dear than the treasure of Thingol that Beren once desired. Such is my fate'" (III, p.340).

However, as previously noted, the Music's power and control is not all-inclusive in that Eru or some force under his direction acts to produce effects which "are new and have no foretelling, for they do not proceed from the past" (S, p.18). Men are not the only people whose lives are influenced by the direct "personal" intervention of an external power, as will be seen in the discussion of Frodo below. From these several cases it can be inferred that Eru, or the Valar acting under

Eru's direction (that is, it is Ulmo's fate to intervene as he does) affect individual destinies and thus the world's destiny to conform to Eru's design.

The Ainur and the Music are responsible, within their defined limits, for the day-to-day management of Arda, but all things, including the Ainur, the Music, and those aspects of Arda which are outside both, are under Eru's direction and evolving according to his design. The part of the design which is present in the Music is complemented by the Ainur's individual contributions to the whole: "'This is your minstrelsy; and each of you shall find contained herein, amid the design that I set before you, all those things which it may seem that he himself devised or added'" (S, p.17). The actions of Men, although outside the Music, also add to the over-all design: "'These too in their time shall find what they do redounds at the end only to the glory of my work'" (S, p.42). Since Ilúvatar knows all things, he also knows how each part will contribute to the whole and ensures that the pattern will be maintained. As he assures Melkor and the other Ainur, "'thou, Melkor, shalt see that no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined'" (S, p.17).

Because the Music must, to be ordered and "musical", be made in harmony and according to a certain design, it is necessary that the singers each know his or her specific part in the creation of the whole, and by playing out the relevant part, each can take his or her proper place under Eru's authority. They initially learn about themselves, and then about each other, under Ilúvatar's guidance: "he spoke to

them, propounding to them themes of music; and they sang before him, and he was glad. But for a long while they sang only each alone, or but few together, while the rest hearkened; for each comprehended only that part of the mind of Ilúvatar from which he came, and in the understanding of their brethren they grew but slowly. Yet even as they listened they came to deeper understanding, and increased in unison and harmony" (S, p.15).

However, Melkor does not learn about himself during the preliminary music. He develops a false impression of himself, and thus a false view of those around him in context to himself: "being alone he had begun to conceive thoughts unlike those of his brethren" (S, p.16). Not understanding himself he misunderstands his role: "desire grew hot within him to bring into Being things of his own, and it seemed to him that Ilúvatar took no thought for the Void, and he was impatient of its emptiness" (S, p.16). He concentrates on the emptiness and nothingness of the Void instead of the substance and potential of himself, and wishes to create individuals outside himself without first learning what is in himself. Since the power to create other living beings is the prerogative of Ilúvatar, Melkor in effect wishes to assume Ilúvatar's role instead of accepting his ultimately secondary role as most powerful of the Ainur.

Because Melkor has a false impression of himself and his role, his perspective of others is also distorted. He cannot assume a complementary role in relation to the other Ainur during the Great Music because of his unbalanced self-image. Instead, he tries to dominate them and declare his independence of Eru: "It came into the heart of Melkor to interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord with the

theme of Ilúvatar; for he sought to increase therein the power and glory of the part assigned to himself" (S, p.16).[1] By doing so, he disrupts the Music, and therefore ensures that disorder and a lack of harmony will appear in Arda. Because the particular faults which cause Melkor to disturb the order of the Music and Arda are a lack of self-knowledge and a consequent lack of perspective concerning himself and others which ensure that he steps out of the complementary place in the order of the cosmic whole, these same tendencies recur continually in Arda's inhabitants and are present in the unfolding of the world's history.

The vital question, of course, is, since Ilúvatar knows all things and the destiny of Arda and its inhabitants is under his control, why does he "allow" Melkor to make his mistake, disrupt the Music, and consequently ensure the disruption of the world? The answer may be found in Manwë's reaction to the rebellious Elf Fëanor's last defiant message, when Ilúvatar reminds him of his (Ilúvatar's) reprimand to Malkor: "But at that last word of Fëanor: that at the least the Noldor should do deeds to live in song for ever, he raised his head, as one that hears a voice far off, and he said: 'So shall it be! Dear-bought those songs shall be accounted, and yet shall be well-bought. For the price could be no other. Thus even as Eru spoke to us shall beauty not before conceived be brought into Eä, and evil yet be good to have been'" (S, p.98; this, of course, recalls the "happy fall" of Paradise Lost).

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1. The connection between a lack of proportion and rebellion against God is made specific in Charles Williams' War in Heaven (1930; rpt. London: Sphere Books, 1976), in which the Archdeacon remarks, "'I should never dream of relying on people who made a practice of defying God - in any real sense. They'd be almost bound to lose all sense of proportion'" (p.189). The difference is that Williams implies that loss of proportion comes after rebellion, while in Tolkien's works rebellion is a result of a lack of proportion.

The thematic importance of good proceeding out of evil according to the controlling authority's plan is clarified by an incident described by Clyde S. Kilby: "I should mention a lengthy account which Tolkien asked me to read. It was in the form of a Job-like conversation on soul and body and the possible purpose of God in allowing the Fall so that He could manifest His own sovereignty over Satan all the more, of Christ's incarnation, the spread of his light from one person to another, and the final consummation at Christ's return. He said he was not certain whether to include this in The Silmarillion or publish it separately."[2] Since Ilúvatar is based on the Judeo-Christian God, keeping in mind the influence of Roman Catholicism in Tolkien's writings, and given the evidence of The Silmarillion quoted above, it is reasonable to assume that Eru's motives in allowing evil to exist are the same as the speculated motives attributed to God in the piece mentioned by Kilby. In other words, Eru intends the Music to be disrupted, so as to emphasize his own supremacy and undeniable authority and power, and to heighten the contrast between "good" and "evil", and between his authoritarian order of unified individuals and the disorderly egotism of rebels who try to assume his place. Therefore, even though they do not realize it, those who revolt are conforming to the pattern which Eru has pre-destined. Every large or small action of chaos has been planned and shaped by Eru to be part of his order.[3] The potential for rebellion is put into Melkor and other rebels by the creator Eru, who knows in advance that the potential will be used. Eru's designs and plans are

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2. Clyde S. Kilby, Tolkien and "The Silmarillion" (Berkhamsted: Lion Publishing, 1977), pp.61-62.

3. Cf. the discussion on Dualism by Clive Staples Lewis in "What Christians Believe", Broadcast Talks (1942; rpt. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1951), pp.44-45.

larger than the Music, which is itself a part of the designs and plans. While the Music is disrupted, the over-ruling power's intended scheme of proceeding is not, especially since Eru allows himself the option of working outside the Music (S, pp.18 and 105) so as to achieve his objects in accordance with his pre-decided pattern.

Presumably the beginning of a perfect world in which goodness can be convincingly manifested without the contrast of evil will occur when the inhabitants of Arda become miniature editions of Ilúvatar through his distribution of the Imperishable Flame and a consequent ability to create genuinely: "it has been said that a greater /music/ still shall be made before Ilúvatar by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar after the end of days. Then the themes of Ilúvatar shall be played aright, and take Being in the moment of their utterance, for all shall then understand fully his intent in their part, and each shall know the comprehension of each, and Ilúvatar shall give to their thoughts the secret fire, being well pleased" (S, pp.15-16). In the fallen, imperfect world, good grows out of evil in the short term, and is visible as "flashes" which promise the eventual complete triumph of good. There are "flashes", for example, in the defeat of Morgoth at the end of the First Age and the establishment of Númenor in the Second Age. However, the original rebellion and the disruption of the Music which made a fallen world cannot be ignored. Despite the removal of Morgoth himself from the world, the consequences of his acts remain: "Yet the lies that Melkor, the mighty and accursed, Morgoth Bauglir, the Power of Terror and of Hate, sowed in the hearts of Elves and Men are a seed that does not die and cannot be destroyed; and ever and anon it sprouts anew, and will bear dark fruit even unto the latest days" (S, p.255). Or, as Gandalf puts it, "'Always after a defeat and a respite,

the Shadow takes another shape and grows again'" (I, p.60). Despite the "flashes", the marred world continues to degenerate, and will eventually be destroyed (as predicted by Christ, whose life can be interpreted as a "flash" in history, in Matthew 24: 2-36). A new, perfect, unfallen world, which will remain perfect and unfallen, will take its place. This belief is common throughout world mythology, according to Mircea Eliade: "The New Creation cannot take place before this world is abolished once and for all. There is no question of regenerating what has degenerated, nothing will serve but to destroy the old world so that it can be recreated in toto. The obsession with the bliss of the beginnings demands the destruction of all that has existed - and hence degenerated - since the beginning of the World; there is no other way to restore the initial perfection."[4] There will be no dialectic between "good" and "evil" in the new world: "goodness" will be manifested without any contrast, and there will be no chaos to threaten order.

The continuous tension between "evil" and "good" (in this world) and the possibility of bringing the latter out of the former (in this world) is, inevitably and appropriately, demonstrated in the Music, as discussed by Ilúvatar and Ulmo:

> And Ilúvatar spoke to Ulmo, and said: "Seest thou not how here in this little realm in the Deeps of Time Melkor hath made war upon thy province? He hath bethought him of bitter cold immoderate, and yet hath not destroyed the beauty of thy fountains, nor of thy clear pools. Behold the snow, and the cunning work of frost! Melkor hath devised heats and fire without restraint, and hath not dried up thy desire nor utterly quelled the music of the sea. Behold rather the height and glory of the clouds, and the everchanging mists; and listen to the fall of rain

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4. Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964), p.52. See also Eliade's Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return, trans. W.R. Trask (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955) and Christopher Dawson, Progress and Religion: An Historical Enquiry (London: Sheed and Ward, 1945), pp.120-23.

> upon the Earth! And in these clouds thou art drawn nearer to Manwë, thy friend, whom thou lovest."
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> Then Ulmo answered: "Truly, Water is become now fairer than my heart imagined, neither had my secret thought conceived the snowflake, nor in all my music was contained the falling of the rain. I will seek Manwë, that he and I may make melodies for ever to thy delight!"
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> (S, p.19)

The proposition that good can come out of evil is even more significant in the third theme of the world-making Music, which creates Elves and Men:

> a third theme grew amid the confusion, and it was unlike the others. For it seemed at first soft and sweet, a mere rippling of gentle sounds in delicate melodies; but it could not be quenched, and it took to itself power and profundity. And it seemed at last that there were two musics progressing at one time before the seat of Ilúvatar, and they were utterly at variance. The one was deep and wide and beautiful, but slow and blended with an immeasurable sorrow, from which its beauty chiefly came. The other had now achieved a unity of its own; but it was loud, and vain, and endlessly repeated; and it had little harmony, but rather a clamorous unison as of many trumpets braying upon a few notes. And it essayed to drown the other music by the violence of its voice, but it seemed that its most triumphant notes were taken by the other and woven into its own solemn pattern.
>
> (S, pp.16-17)

The third theme therefore creates the Children of Ilúvatar as a good which would otherwise not have been: "the Children of Ilúvatar were conceived by him alone; and they came with the third theme, and were not in the theme which Ilúvatar propounded at the beginning" (S, p.18). However, because the third theme utilizes some of Melkor's contending music, the Children are subject to the temptation experienced by him. When they fall, as he does, they strive in vain to go against the original harmonious order, as does Melkor. That is, although the potential to rebel has been placed in Melkor's nature by Eru himself, it is Melkor who does the rebelling against Eru as part of Eru's plan. Even those who are agents of order experience the negative effects of the contending

music. Nevertheless, positive effects do emerge from negative actions,[5] and characters such as Boromir or Gollum who try to further their own designs and intentionally or unintentionally create disorder ultimately contribute to the triumph of order and harmony.

Taking Tolkien's work as a whole, the history of Arda can be seen as a series of events which occur when certain people try to modify or abandon their God-given places (along with the attached powers, privileges and obligations) and disrupt harmony and order, and other individuals, who are inevitably affected by the ambitions and disturbing effects of such people, try to maintain or restore harmony and order. Their efforts against the disruptive influences involve a struggle to keep or achieve their own places and help other people of similar good intentions to do the same. They, being self-knowledgeable or trying to attain self-knowledge, are able to perceive their own rights and obligations, and the rights and obligations of others, and are willing to abide by Eru's designs and have faith in his ultimate purpose. They proceed in their endeavours by way of trying to understand and practise "natural theology".

Discussing The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien said "'The only criticism that annoyed me was one that it "contained no religion".... It is a monotheistic world of "natural theology".'"[6] He did not define the term "natural theology", but a good description (although not using the specific epithet "natural theology") is given by R.J. Reilly: "It is

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5. That positive effects come from negative actions is one of the "internal laws" noted by Randel Helms in his discussion of The Lord of the Rings. The other "internal laws" are concerned with the providential control of the cosmos; the relation between moral and magical law and physical law; the physical force of will and emotion; and the relation between action and proverb. Some of these points are examined, with a different emphasis, in this section. See Tolkien's World (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp.83-114, for the complete discussion.

6. Quoted by W.B. Glover, "The Christian Character of Tolkien's Invented World", Criticism, 13 (Winter 1971), p.39.

the sense of a cosmic moral law, consciously obeyed or disobeyed by the characters, but existing nowhere as a formulated and codified body of doctrine."[7] To put it another way, to live according to "natural theology" is to live according to the unexpressed but intuitively understood will of God, and to attempt to uphold or restore God's order when it is threatened by disorder - to work, fight and live on the "right" side of the order-disorder dichotomy. "Natural theology" is practised even by such ignorant people as Hobbits precisely because it is "natural", that is, according to nature. Most of the Hobbits have forgotten all the little they ever knew of the Valar, and (one assumes) of Eru, the beginning of the world, its organization, and most of its history, including the great conflicts between order and chaos fought during the First, Second and earlier part of the Third Age. Yet Hobbits are specifically mentioned by Tolkien as "'examples of natural philosophy and natural religion.'"[8] They practise natural theology for the reason that they believe that "peace and plenty were the rule in Middle-earth and the right of all sensible folk" (I, p.14). They live "decently" and reasonably because it is the "decent" reasonable thing to do - and thus contribute to order while hardly being aware that there is an order-disorder conflict.

According to Christopher Dawson, the inhabitants of a primitive culture are intensely aware of forces outside themselves and regard them as "natural" although "other" (non-human): "The whole life of

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7. R.J. Reilly, "Tolkien and the Fairy Story," in Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", ed. Neil D. Issacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), p.140. Hereafter cited as TC. For a detailed discussion of this concept with relation to world cultures, see, for example, Dawson, especially Chapter V.

8. Philip Norman, "The Hobbit Man", Sunday Times Magazine, 15 January 1967, p.35.

society had a religious orientation, and religion was the vital centre of the social organism. This is not because primitive man is essentially more religious than modern man, or less interested in the material side of life. It is because the material and spiritual aspects of his culture are inextricably intermingled with one another, as that the religious factor intervenes at every moment of his existence. Even the simplest of his material needs can only be satisfied by the favour of the co-operation of supernatural forces."[9] A more sophisticated view of the "supernatural" involves a "conception of a universal order which governs the whole course of nature"[10] and "the idea that the law of social life must be a reflection of and a participation in the universal divine order which rules the universe...."[11] The universal order "is both spiritual and material, at once the order of justice and the order of nature."[12] The Hobbits vaguely subscribe to the idea of an authority outside themselves deriving from tradition (for which they have a strong regard, as is inevitable in a conservative and parochial society) and based on the abstract notion of "fair play": "the Hobbits still said of wild folk and wicked things (such as trolls) that they had not heard of the king. For they attributed to the king of old all their essential laws; and usually they kept the laws of free will, because they were The Rules (as they said), both ancient and just" (I, p.18).

From their limited knowledge, the Hobbits express, simply and succinctly, a basic truth about the "correct" way for the inhabitants of the world to relate to each other and to the world (these include the

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9. Dawson, p.97.

10. Dawson, p.126.

11. Dawson, p.126.

12. Dawson, p.127.

Valar, the "Powers of the World" (S, p.20) and the Maiar in their service). Tolkien once referred to the "'odd fact that there are no churches, temples or religious rites and ceremonies'" in The Lord of the Rings, and went on to say that this "'is simply part of the historical climate depicted. It will be sufficiently explained - if (as now seems likely) The Silmarillion and other legends of the First Age are published."[13] With the publication of The Silmarillion, the omission is explained in a perfectly intelligible manner. It would be ridiculous for Elves in Aman, living next door to the Valar, to prostrate themselves at every meeting or to make inquiries as to what sacrifices would be most acceptable. Rather, they regard the Valar as patrons or partners. In Middle-earth they continue not to worship formally (which procedure would, in any event, be contradictory or open to suspicion since they left Aman against the Valar's will and in disruptive circumstances) and, since they are the teachers of Men, the latter also do not instigate rites or rituals of worship in the First Age. What is far more pervasive than the concept of formal worship is the idea that "good" characters, by being "good", practise what is not preached, because it is (or should be) too obvious to need verbal expression. The will of God requires no priest as interpreter because it is known to all. "Good" behaviour-keeping in the place assigned by Eru and filling its concomitant responsibilities in a positive manner - is the acknowledgment desired by the "supernatural" forces. Whereas in many other fairy-stories the action tends to be influenced by the protagonist's relationship with a

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13. Quoted by Glover, p.39.

deity or deities (for example, the friendship or enmity of a god),[14] in Tolkien the plot is determined by the ways in which the characters relate to each other and the world by living in accord with or rebellion against the ideology and kind of life associated with the "deities." (Rites and rituals relating to Eru and the Ainur are instigated in the Second and Third Ages, as discussed below, but these are, in effect, recognitions of the disorder of Middle-earth, and are practised only by the sophisticated Númenorean culture, since societies such as that of the Hobbits are not really aware, in an articulate way, of the order-disorder conflict.)

The delicacy of the balance between good and evil and cause and effect, which depends fundamentally on moderation and a correct perspective, means that, even when a character's attempt to change his place or assume a role not meant for him is made with good intentions, the results can be disastrous (in the short term, although of course all actions, positive and negative, will, in the long term, contribute to the triumph of "good"). For example, both the Steward Denethor and his son Boromir believe that they are more able and more perceptive than Aragorn (or Gandalf), and can therefore rule Gondor better and are entitled to do so because of their supposed superiority. Boromir's attempt on the Ring and Denethor's use of the palantír or "seeing stone" and his general policy have a positive element in that they both honestly wish to preserve Gondor and think that the "supernatural" object in

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14. The "human" arbitrariness and irresponsibility of most members of pantheons should be kept in mind. Geirroth and CuChulainn are two examples of mortals who meet their deaths due to the malice of a god. See Hilda Roderick Ellis Davidson, Gods and Myths of Northern Europe (1964; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), pp.219-220; Eleanor Hull, A Text Book of Irish Literature, I (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, n.d.), p.33; and Tolkien, MC, p.31, for some discussions.

question will help them to do so. However, the countering factors are that both are also interested in personal power, and concerned almost exclusively with Gondor's welfare instead of the welfare of Middle-earth. Because they do not know themselves, they cannot perceive that they are second-in-command material, and that Aragorn and Gandalf are the right persons for the roles which they (Denethor and Boromir) are trying to assume.

Even those rebelling against Eru's order must remain true to the principles of order, in that they remain true to themselves, to their Eru-given tendencies or temperaments. It is the role or function of "evil" characters to be "evil", but in doing so they must obey certain basic rules. In rebelling against Eru's order they can pervert its form, but not its content since part of the content is their own rebelliousness. The "evil" characters see (or re-see) the world from a perspective which indicates to them that Eru's order is incorrect (or disorderly). By trying to impose the structures dictated by their own perspectives upon it they are trying to re-create it according to what they believe to be the true or correct order. Morgoth, Sauron, Saruman and others attempt to establish an order in which they rule and there is no individuality or separateness, so that everyone and everything else is part of the ruler and exists only in relation to him, which would ensure a perverse harmony and unity. While the "good" characters struggle to return to Eru by maintaining or restoring his order, the "evil" characters strive to "return" to the authority by becoming the authority.

This relationship between "good" and "evil" illustrates the balance between conservatism and dynamism. Melkor, Sauron and Saruman do not envisage any real structural change in the system: rather, they attempt

to take Eru's place as creator and supreme power, entrusting a limited amount of power in certain areas to select subordinates. On the other hand, while Eru's order has an essentially conservative nature because of its hierarchy and the immortality or longevity of most of the "good" characters, there is a dynamic element within it. If there were not, there would have been no change or progress in the Music at all, while in fact there were changes even before Melkor rebelled. Changes in the Music and in the world created by the Music grow and develop, and the participants under Eru's control introduce changes because they are allowed to be themselves and make individual contributions to the whole. There is creativity (or sub-creativity) endorsed by Eru within his stable structure. When the dynamic tendencies of rebels disrupt the stability of Eru's order, he ensures that the disruptors work (usually unknowingly) towards the restoration of stability.

The shifting balance between the two extremes of the dichotomy involves a constant readjustment and a demand for "payment": that is, in order to receive something positive one must also receive something negative, or in order to receive something one must also give something. Characters like Túrin, one of the most prominent figures of the First Age, and Frodo, the Ring-bearer, achieve great fame and glory, but they also suffer intensely. Beren and Lúthien have the greatest happiness of the Children of Ilúvatar, but Beren must make a "payment of anguish for the fate that was laid on him; and in his fate Lúthien was caught, and... her anguish was greater than any other of the Eldalië has known" (S, pp.165-66). Melian is happy with Thingol in Doriath, but after his death she leaves Middle-earth "to muse upon her sorrows" (S, p.234). Arwen reigns with Aragorn "for six-score years in great glory and bliss" (III, p.343), but, as Elrond predicts, finds the Doom of Men

"'hard at the ending'" (III, p.342). It is because she gives up her place in the ship to Frodo that the Hobbit is able to go to Aman, and, speculatively, it would seem that since her brothers also do not exercise their right to pass over the sea, they have given up their places to Bilbo and Sam. The Ring-bearers gain immortality because the three Elves lose it.

The necessity of "payment" also ensures that the misdeeds of others are visited on the protagonists. In the First Age the Oath of Fëanor and the Kinslaying affect even those Noldor who are not directly involved with either: they are significant factors in Finrod's defeat by Sauron and in Maeglin's twisted love for Idril. One of the reasons why Húrin, Huor and their followers are willing to sacrifice themselves at Serech is to redress the treachery of Uldor and the faithless Easterlings. Explaining his part in the search for Gollum, prior to the start of the War of the Ring, Aragorn says "'it seemed fit that Isildur's heir should labour to repair Isildur's fault'" (I, p.264). The requirement that some pay for the misdeeds of others (one of the results of original sin, according to Christian tradition) emphasizes the communal nature of Arda, in that every inhabitant is part of a vast composite body, and must contribute to the order which can be brought out of disorder in the eventual fulfilment of Eru's design.

Because Arda is a deterministic world, there is no "free will" in the sense of independence from the control of Eru.[15] When Fëanor

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15. This, of course, was a much laboured issue before the publication of The Silmarillion, which revealed that the events of the War of the Ring were pre-planned. For examples of discussion on the subject see Paul H. Kocher, Master of Middle-Earth: The Fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972); Douglass Parker, "Hwaet We Holbytla...", Hudson Review, 9 (Winter 1956-57), 598-609; and Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Ethical Pattern in The Lord of the Rings", Critique, 3 (Spring-Fall 1959), 30-42, much of which is reprinted in TC, pp.81-99.

announces that he will not give up the Silmarils to Yavanna to help her revive the Two Trees "'of free will'" he is referring to coercion by the Valar: "'But if the Valar will constrain me, then shall I know indeed that Melkor is of their kindred'" (S, p.79). He is unwilling to surrender his personal pride and joy for the sake of the greater good. After describing Melkor's theft of the jewels Tolkien the commentator adds: "The Silmarils had passed away, and all one it may seem whether Fëanor had said yea or nay to Yavanna; yet had he said yea at the first, before the tidings came from Formenos, it may be that his after deeds would have been other than they were. But now the Doom of the Noldor drew nigh" (S, p.79). The events which follow on Fëanor's decision might have been different if his answer had been different, but the dictates of his character (which is determined, ultimately, by Eru) make the nature of his reply inevitable. The comment refers to Fëanor's personality which explains his choice and makes it and the aftermath a believable extension of his obsessions and distorted outlook rather than a genuine alternative, since a selfless decision is not within the possibilities of his character. The addendum indicates that the Doom of the Noldor, hinging on Fëanor's decision, has already been decided, and has been approaching to take place when it does (it is important for the reader to keep in mind at such points the information already given, S, pp.17-18, 41, about "fate" and the role of the Music).

The case of Frodo is another example. At the Council of Elrond he is still uncertain about his own potential: he tells Gandalf "'I have had a month of exile and adventure, and I find that has been as much as I want'" (I, p.233) and "'I haven't any courage to keep up'" (I, p.235), reiterating self-doubts he had previously voiced to Gandalf at Bag End (I, pp.68, 70, 72) and to Gildor (I, p.94). Moreover, he has not

shaken off the fears of the trip to Rivendell, or the longing to settle down in peace at Elrond's house with Bilbo. His love for the Shire, his capacity for self-sacrifice on behalf of others, and his sense of identity are, at this point, not sufficient to make him overcome his self-doubts and fears and volunteer to be the Ring-bearer, a role he sees (at this point) as involving such conventionally heroic qualities as great physical courage and fighting ability. Therefore, when he is confronted with the dilemma of the Ring, he is surprised by his actions:

> A great dread fell on him, as if he was awaiting the pronouncement of some doom that he had long foreseen and vainly hoped might after all never be spoken. An overwhelming longing to rest and remain at peace by Bilbo's side in Rivendell filled all his heart. At last with an effort he spoke, and wondered to hear his own words, as if some other will was using his small voice.
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> "I will take the Ring," he said, "though I do not know the way."
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> Elrond raised his eyes and looked at him, and Frodo felt his heart pierced by the sudden keenness of the glance. "If I understand aright all that I have heard," he said, "I think that this task is appointed for you, Frodo; and that if you do not find a way, no one will. This is the hour of the Shire-folk, when they arise from their quiet fields to shake the towers and counsels of the Great. Who of all the Wise could have foreseen it? Or, if they are wise, why should they expect to know it, until the hour has struck?
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> "But it is a heavy burden. So heavy that none could lay it on another. I do not lay it on you. But if you take it freely, I will say that your choice is right; and though all the mighty elf-friends of old, Hador, and Húrin, and Túrin, and Beren himself were assembled together, your seat should be among them."
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> (I, p.284; emphasis added)

Elrond thinks that Frodo has been chosen as the one to take the Ring, that the authority in charge of the situation has decided to appoint the task to him, unlikely though it might seem. "Free will" in this context refers to a choice made without any pressure or persuasion offered by the people around Frodo. Elrond cannot know that Frodo

feels "as if some other will was using his small voice."

Just as "free will" does not exist in Arda, neither do "chance", "luck" or "fortune" in the sense of being random events or coincidences, since all parts of the cosmic whole are under Eru's control and act in accordance with his designs. They are other terms for "fate" or "doom" or "destiny". The controlled nature of the cosmos is recognized by the wiser and more thoughtful characters, who frequently undertake to enlighten others. Gandalf notes to Frodo and Gimli that all the disastrous consequences which would have been possible during the War of the Ring if Smaug had still been King under the Mountain at the time have"'been averted - because I met Thorin Oakenshield one evening on the edge of spring in Bree. A chance-meeting, as we say in Middle-earth'" (III, p.360, emphasis added).[16] The addendum indicates that while such an event may be regarded as coincidence in Middle-earth, those who live elsewhere (that is, in Aman, where Gandalf once lived) have a different opinion. He also asks Bilbo "'You don't really suppose, do you, that all your adventures and escapes were managed by mere luck, just for your sole benefit?'" (H, pp.278-79). The implication here is that, while events worked out well for Bilbo, some power so managed the situation with additional motives besides Bilbo's welfare. An instance of "good luck" or "ill fate" is dictated by the individual's assigned fate. This is implied in Thorin's description of Bilbo as a person "'possessed

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16. The account of the meeting between Gandalf and Thorin is worth noting. Thorin tells Gandalf "'You have often come into my thoughts of late, as if I were bidden to seek you'", and Gandalf replies, "'That is strange... For I have thought of you also; and though I am on my way to the Shire, it was in my mind that is the way also to your halls'" (III, p.359; emphasis added). Here, as in other cases, Tolkien indicates that a particular event is not a coincidence, and an external power has been dropping hints or making suggestions to people so as to further the cosmic planner's designs.

of good luck far exceeding the usual allowance'" (H, p.194), an opinion reinforced by the author's comment that Bilbo "was born with a good share of it" (H, p.145), and Bilbo's own feelings (H, p.195 and LR, I, p.283). When Aragorn exclaims that "'An ill fate is on me this day, and all that I do goes amiss'" (II, p.15), he means that at that point in time it is his assigned fate that he will, according to his own judgment, do the "wrong" thing. He hopes that a "right" decision about his course will "'change the evil fate of this unhappy day'" (p.21): that is, positive (according to his view) consequences will follow his decision.

Therefore, when Tolkien, either as narrator or through a character, describes an event as being the result of "luck" or "fortune" or "fate", he is referring to a specific authority. In The Silmarillion events which are explained as occurring due to "luck" or "chance" are readily perceived as being ruled, ultimately, by Eru, whether "personally" or through an agent (the Valar, the Music), particularly since we are given the information of "Ainulindalë" at the beginning, which is reinforced by references to the controlling authority of the cosmos throughout the book (see, for example, pp.78,88,98,99,187,253). Thus, when, for example, we are told that Gwindor was, due to "ill chance" (S, p.191), in an excellent position at the Fifth Battle to witness the mutilation and death of his brother which provokes him into a premature and disastrous attack, we can perceive that once more the Curse of Mandos and the rejection of "natural theology" at the Kinslaying are at work to bring about the Doom of the Noldor predicted by Mandos and endorsed by the other Valar. Similarly, during the story of Beren and Lúthien, it is obvious that Eru is at work, either by direct action (as when the thought of Doriath is put into Beren's mind) or through the many

references to "fate" and "doom" throughout the story (for example, pp.164,165,166,167,168,172-73,179,181,187). The Silmarillion can be described as the "overview" or divinities' eyeview of history in that we are constantly and unmistakably aware of divine authority and its role in history and the actions of people in ensuring that events will follow the ordered pattern which it has pre-ordained.

In The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings Tolkien does not call the over-ruling power Ilúvatar or Eru. Presumably the omission occurs because the naming of a specific agent is unnecessary for the purposes of the former when considered as a children's book, and, in the case of the latter, possibly because it developed originally as a sequel to The Hobbit. Another possible reason is that the historical conditions of the end of the Third Age, one of which was a loss of knowledge about Eru, the Ainur and past events, dictated that a specific reference to the "deity" and "angelic powers" would be inappropriate in terms of the world situation during the action of the The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings.[17] Nonetheless, in these stories the role of "providence" is sufficiently indicated so that, without Eru being named, a controlling external power can be perceived. Tolkien drew upon the mythology and literature of northern Europe in creating his works, and their influence can be noted in his use of the term "fate" (or "doom" or "destiny").[18] The concept

17. In a letter to Father Robert Murray Tolkien wrote: "The Lord of the Rings is of course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work; unconsciously so at first but consciously in the revision. I...have cut out practically all references to anything like 'religion,' to cults and practices in the imaginary world. For the religious element is absorbed into the story and the symbolism." See "A Tribute to Tolkien", The Tablet, 227, no.6950 (15 September 1973), 879-80.

18. For discussion of "fate" in north European cultures, see, for example, Davidson; John Arnott MacCulloch, The Celtic and Scandinavian Religions (London: Hutchison's University Library, 1949); Brian Branston, Gods of the North (London: Thames and Hudson, 1955); and especially Peter Hallberg, The Icelandic Saga, trans. Paul Schach (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1962).

of "fate" as derived from these sources is used as a "given" background, much as the authors and compilers of the northern tales used it. That is, they did not have to explain to their audience what "fate" was, or how and why it operated. To say that fate decrees an event is self-explanatory. Tolkien also uses his wisest and most knowledgable characters such as Gandalf, Elrond, Aragorn and Galadriel[19] to tell the less well-informed characters (and the reader) that there is an over-ruling authority at work which can be called "fate" (or "doom" or "destiny" - or Eru or Ilúvatar), but whatever it is called, it is present. By observing the ignorant characters' growth of knowledge, often expressed through "small" truths (appropriate because the Hobbit viewpoint from which The Lord of the Rings is told is that of ignorant, parochial and rather fussy people) which point towards "large" or universal truths, the reader accumulates, piece by piece, a concept of the "overview" which is presented more completely and explicitly in The Silmarillion, which was intended as a "mythology for England"[20] and therefore, to fulfil one of the requirements of a mythology, necessarily contained a creation story and tales of the world before it was inhabited by non-divine beings, as well as stories told from the mortal (or elvish) viewpoint. The Lord of the Rings (and The Hobbit) uses The Silmarillion as a "given" background (at least in the author's mind) and the "overview" is not repeated. Therefore, authorial usage of "fate", "doom", "fortunately" and similar

19. See, for example, I, pp.65,255,372,384,420, among others. The use of the many predictions and flashes of foresight or foreknowledge should also be observed since they are employed to indicate that the future has already been decided, as when, for example, Sam has the vision of the "dead" Frodo and devastated Shire in the Mirror of Galadriel. These two examples are cases of the ignorant becoming knowledgeable, but when a reliable spokesperson such as Elrond or Gandalf makes a prediction about the course of future events, the reader should pay particularly close attention.

20. See Humphrey Carpenter, J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977), pp.89-90. Hereafter cited as Carpenter.

terms, as well as declarations of what is "right", "wrong", "true", "false", "fitting" and "improper", must be noted in order to understand the story more completely. For example, in Lórien Sam notes that the Elves "'seem to belong here, more even than Hobbits do in the Shire'" (I, p.376), thus using two cases in his limited experience to express one facet of the truth about relative and correct place in the cosmic order. Later, watching Frodo sleep, he is "struck most by the leanness of his face and hands. 'Too thin and drawn he is,' he muttered. 'Not right for a hobbit'" (II, p.261; emphasis added). Frodo's thinness indicates that there is something out of order with regard to this particular inhabitant of Arda, and points to a larger, more universal disorder. Towards the end of their journey, in the desolation and disorder of Mordor, Sam sees a star: "'like a shaft, clear and cold, the thought pierced him that in the end the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach" (III, p.199). Without mentioning "God" as such, a divine power for "good", more powerful than "evil", is implied. What the reader develops as the story progresses is not necessarily "a faith in a 'God' who orders all according to his will but a faith that there is such a providential design; not a hope in a God who at the end brings all things to their consummation but a hope that the happy ending will come."[21] That there are strong "divine" powers is indicated by the references to the Valar throughout The Lord of the Rings (see, for example, I, pp.14,94,210,251, 394,403; II, pp.269,338-339; III, pp.246,315-17).[22] That there is a

21. Gunnar Urang, Shadows of Heaven: Religion and Fantasy in the Fiction of C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams and J.R.R. Tolkien (London: SCM Press, 1971), p.120.

22. With regard to the Valar, it should be noted that to say, as Gildor does, "'May Elbereth protect you!'" (I, p.94) "makes sense only if Elbereth is supposed to have the power to know what is happening to the companions and power to protect them." This point is made by Richard Purtill, Lord of the Elves and Eldils: Philosophy and Fantasy in C.S.Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), p.118.

being over the Valar is indicated by references to "the One" in the appendices (III, pp.315,317). Upon reading The Silmarillion the accumulated picture becomes complete and the reader is able to see exactly who and what "the Valar" and "the One" are, why the "providential design" works as it does, and that there is in fact a "'God' who orders all according to his will...."

Assertion of a character's individuality and fulfilment of his/her pre-destined and assigned role in history are intricately connected, and it is possible to ignore the "divine" role in Tolkien's works and note that the people involved in the action behave as they do because the necessary elements for motivating that particular behaviour are in that character's personality. Eru the pre-destiner (or Tolkien the sub-creator) does not "make" a person do something in carrying out his/her role which is not within the possibilities of his/her character unless the reader is specifically told that there has been "meddling" from some "external" source, or "divine intervention" (such as, for example, the "voice" which activates Frodo and Sam when they have collapsed on Mount Doom, III, p.219). The fact that history has been pre-destined and that a character will (even if he/she is not aware of it) fulfil Eru's purpose by carrying out an assigned role and performing pre-decided actions does not negate the characters' self-assertion and fulfilment; rather, it makes self-fulfilment possible. No one thinks of him/herself as acting in a particular way because it has been decided by Eru that such will be the case. In this sense the role of fate (or divine authority) is similar to the way fate operates in the sagas. It is not employed as an unanswerable explanation or escape hatch to justify characters' actions. Rather it works, so to speak, in co-operation with the already displayed motives and emotions to forward the narrative. As Peter Hallberg comments,

"fate does not appear as a deus ex machina which suddenly reveals itself and turns the course of events in a certain direction. On the contrary, the development of the action... is quite adequately motivated in the characters of the persons themselves...."[23] Thus, when Fëanor determines to pursue the Silmarils at all costs or Denethor refuses to surrender his power to the returned King, their actions are readily understandable in terms of the personality traits which they have already exhibited in word, thought and deed. It is how each character plays out his role, with what attitudes he regards himself and others, and how he reacts to the situations in which he finds himself, that reveal his personality and make his career understandable in terms of his personality.

For example, there are many different artists and kinds of artistry in Tolkien's works. Yavanna creates the Two Trees, Fëanor creates the Silmarils, which contain the Light of the Trees. Yavanna does not try to keep the Trees to herself, and while pleased with her work, does not become excessively attached to it. In contrast, "The heart of Fëanor was fast bound to these things that he himself had made" (S, p.67). He becomes possessive and conscious of his power over them as their creator (or, to put it another way, of their power over him), so that he misuses that power to deny others the right to see them except when he feels like displaying them. When Yavanna (and the other inhabitants of Aman) are robbed of the Trees by Melkor she asks Fëanor to surrender the jewels so that she can restore Light to the world and frustrate the malice of Melkor. Fëanor resolves to keep the Silmarils to himself, forgetting that "the Light within them was not his own" (S, p.69). This decision is accepted without remonstrance or reproach by Yavanna, who thus loses irrevocably her greatest artistic creation. Immediately afterwards comes the news that Morgoth has robbed Fëanor of his artistic creations,

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23. Hallberg, p.91.

and he determines immediately on revenge, recovery and restitution, to be achieved by force of arms. He will not (or cannot) recognize, in his egotism, that all have suffered his loss, and that this is, in fact "poetically just" (and no doubt the subject of poems in later times) in terms of the deprivation with which he planned to afflict all those not in his favour (that is, all those not allowed to see the Silmarils). The Doom of the Noldor, the poisoning of the Trees and the loss of the Silmarils are inevitable because of pre-decision, an inevitability which is emphasized by authorial comment which warns the reader in advance that these events will take (or have taken) place. The actions and attitudes of Yavanna and Fëanor show, in part, how the Trees and Jewels are lost and the Noldor rebellion occurs. However, the two parallel cases are also advanced as situations in which Yavanna and Fëanor assert themselves through their artistic creations and their feelings about them. Although the reader is aware of the role of "fate" or "doom" in the story, the tale unfolds comprehensibly through the personality-justified actions of Yavanna and Fëanor.

Other examples of parallel situations being established by Tolkien with a view to demonstrating individual reactions in terms of character which are nevertheless pre-destined to occur within Eru's designs can be seen in situations involving vows sworn and oaths made. An oath or promise is an assertion of self. When the Company leaves Rivendell, Elrond, having given Frodo the opportunity to retract his word, lays the burden of trust only on the Ring-bearer:

> "On him alone is any charge laid: neither to cast away the Ring, nor to deliver it to any servant of the Enemy nor indeed to let any handle it, save members of the Company and the Council, and only then in gravest need. The others go with him as free companions.... no oath or bond is laid on you

> to go further than you will. For you do not yet know the strength of your hearts, and you cannot foresee what each may meet upon the road."
>
> "Faithless is he that says farewell when the road darkens," said Gimli.
>
> "Maybe," said Elrond, "but let him not vow to walk in the dark, who has not seen the nightfall."
>
> "Yet sworn word may strengthen quaking heart," said Gimli.
>
> "Or break it," said Elrond.
>
> (I, p.294)

If an oath is not fulfilled, the consequence is a betrayal and loss of self. This is the fate which Maedhros and Maglor discuss at the end of the First Age, when they realize with dismay exactly what they have undertaken to do and what they have called upon themselves. They choose to keep (or try to keep) their oath and accept the consequences, rather than the alternative prospect of the "Everlasting Dark" (S, p.83). Maedhros' death and Maglor's eternal exile in Middle-earth, as well as their dispossession, defeats and the deaths of their brothers, are indicated as being inevitable by the Prophecy of the North, or the Doom of the Noldor, spoken by Mandos, who "knows all things that shall be, save only those that lie still in the freedom of Ilúvatar" (S, p.28), and who is several times shown in his role of (almost) omniscient Doomsman before the Noldor leave Aman. The King of the Dead and his followers avoid the "Everlasting Dark" because Isildur places a binding curse upon them, so that they (like Boromir) have an opportunity to redeem themselves. Baldor asserts himself by making a "'rash vow'" (III, p.70) to walk the Paths of the Dead where he does not belong (cf. III, p.128), and dies in the performance of his boast. That Baldor is destined to fail because he is not the right person to succeed and the Dead destined to be held as "undead" ghosts until they are released at the proper time by the proper person in the proper circumstances is indicated by

Galadriel's message to Aragorn (II, p.106), especially the lines "Near is the hour when the Lost should come forth" and "dark is the path appointed for thee"; by Aragorn's explanation of the legend of the oath-breakers and of Malbeth the Seer's prophecy (III, pp.54-55); and by Théoden's explanation of Baldor's adventure (III, pp.70-71). Finrod, despite his premonition of death and his prophecy to Galadriel (S, p.130) which he remembers and knows will be fulfilled, also determines to keep his word, and it is implied that his fate is preferable to the degeneration experienced by his subjects after his departure, since they have broken faith with their King and disrupted the society's structure of command and obedience (in effect, gone against natural theology).

Elrond places the burden of trust only where it is essential for the world's safety, since he does not wish anyone to risk losing himself when he does not know what he will have to face. Having asserted that "'the Men of Minas Tirith are true to their word'" (I, p.373) - the word which Elrond had specifically not asked for - Boromir makes a liar out of himself at Parth Galen by trying to take the Ring and break the trust to which he commits himself when he joins the Company. His speeches to Frodo show that he is aware of the role of "fate": "'Is it not a strange fate that we should suffer so much fear and doubt for so small a thing?'" and "'in our need chance brings to light the Ring of Power. It is a gift, I say; a gift to the foes of Mordor. It is mad not to use it, to use the power of the Enemy against him. The fearless, the ruthless, these alone will achieve victory. What could not a warrior do in this hour, a great leader?'" (I, p.414). He believes that Frodo holds the Ring only "'by unhappy chance'" (I, p.415) - a "mistake" made by the happy "chance" which provided Sauron's enemies with the Ring. He interprets Frodo's refusal as a perversion of what should and must be,

and proposes to "correct" the "mistake": "'It might have been mine. It should be mine. Give it to me!'" (I, p.415). Boromir, by mistaking his role - thinking that he can be more than what he is, which is a courageous second-in-command warrior - and by momentarily deserting his place within the Company out of a combination of personal ambition and genuine altruism, is fated to serve the cause of order by driving Frodo into leaving the Fellowship at a point when Frodo cannot quite drive himself into this drastic action. This is the "right" course for Frodo to take (especially since the Ring would have been an irresistible temptation to Denethor if it had entered Minas Tirith), and it is another example of "good" proceeding out of "evil" under Eru's supervision. Boromir dies while obeying Aragorn's direction (it is both a command from a leader and a request for help from a concerned friend) to protect the two younger Hobbits: Boromir's obedience/agreement indicate that he has once more assumed his correct place as a subordinate and is serving others rather than trying to promote his own interests to the exclusion of others' welfare. His death in the service of order, the cause from which he momentarily transfers his allegiance, rescues him from the "'peril'" (II, p.99) in which Galadriel had seen him - the peril of self-loss if he betrayed the trust placed in him. Realizing this, Gandalf declares to Denethor "'He would have stretched out his hand to this thing, and taking it he would have fallen. He would have kept it for his own, and when he returned you would not have known your son'" (III, p.86). Gandalf is referring not only to the Ring's corrupting influence, but to the self-loss which Boromir would have experienced. This is a prophecy which Boromir is preserved from fulfilling.

Denethor is the less impressed by this argument because he is a potential oath-breaker himself. Like all the Stewards he assumes his

office "with the oath 'to hold rod and rule in the name of the king, until he shall return'" (III, p.333). His moral destruction and death come about because, whether the war is lost or won, he has no intention of keeping his word and surrendering his authority to restore the true order. He rejects the opportunity offered by Gandalf because he wishes to die in the role in which he has lived: that is, as himself as defined by his role as Ruling Steward. He does not realize that he is, as Pippin perceives, "'not himself'" (III, p.100). He has been deceived and influenced by Sauron, and is in the process of losing himself. He is a "fatalist" in that, by putting his faith in Sauron's visions, he foresees defeat for the West, and hastens to do everything in his power to help cause that defeat. Yet he does not see his actions as a surrender to Sauron or the defeat which he believes is inevitable, but as an assertion of himself and his own will to self-determination. Gandalf points out "'Authority is not given to you, Steward of Gondor, to order the hour of your death'" (III, p.129). The use of the title is meant to remind Denethor of the limits of his own rights and powers, and of exactly who does order the hour of his (and every one else's) death. However, Denethor insists that if "'doom'" (III, p.130) will not accord him his desires, "'then I will have <u>naught</u>: neither life diminished, nor love halved, nor honour abated'" (III, p.130). In fact, his "'heathen'" (III, p.129) suicide (which, Denethor does not recognize, is permitted by Eru who had decided the hour and the manner of his death) cuts off his life and reduces the love and honour with which he is remembered.

Faramir is extremely conscious of the role of "fate" (note how often he uses the word or one of its synonyms), and comments that it is "'a pretty stroke of fortune'" (II, p.289) for the Hobbits, fleeing from his brother's faithless effort to seize the Ring, to run into his geographical sphere of authority, where he could easily finish what Boromir had tried

to start. However, Faramir is strongly aware of his own integrity and the integrity of others. He realizes that, for Boromir, the temptation offered by the Ring "'was too sore a trial!'" His next words unknowingly echo Boromir: "'We are truth-speakers, we men of Gondor. We boast seldom, and then perform, or die in the attempt. Not if I found it on the highway would I take it I said. Even if I were such a man as to desire this thing, and even though I knew not clearly what this thing was when I spoke, still I should take those words as a vow, and be held by them'" (II, p.289). Faramir does not know (and Frodo does not tell him) that Boromir, being a man who did desire the Ring, had made the same boasts of Gondorean faithfulness, and died as a "payment" (cf. II, p.16) for attempting to break his "vow" rather than keep it.[24] By being true to himself, Faramir is true to his duty, while the other two members of his family can remain true to their own natures only by being false to natural theology and the effort to restore the true order. By betraying their oaths and their obligations, they lose themselves to madness. Faramir also has more respect for the integrity of others. For example, Boromir urges Frodo to abandon his burden of trust, and if he had succeeded in taking the Ring he would, in effect, have forced Frodo to break his word. Faramir strongly advises Frodo not to follow Gollum, but when he realizes that Frodo has "'promised many times to take him under my protection and to go where he led'" (II, p.301) he reluctantly agrees that the Hobbit must keep his word despite the danger. When Denethor determines on the "unnatural" act of burning himself and Faramir, he forces his servants to decide between rebelling against their lord or against the "divine" order which forbids such behaviour. Faramir,

24. Faramir's confidence in Gondorean faithfulness is not based on a rose-tinted view of his brother. His assessment of Boromir as "'proud and fearless, often rash, ever anxious for the victory of Minas Tirith (and his own glory therein)'" (II, p.280) is a very fair description. Knowing himself, he is able to see others as they really are. Faramir does realize that Boromir attempted to take the Ring by force, but does not know of the latter's boasts of fidelity, whatever he may guess.

by not going against natural theology, places no such onus on his followers.

Tolkien also uses the Beren-Lúthien-Thingol complex of relationships to show actions which occur within the dictates of a pre-destined fate and are performed by individuals who have committed themselves by vows or promises. Despite Thingol's promise that Beren may marry Lúthien if he captures a Silmaril and Beren's promise that he will complete the quest, the situation as it develops eventually leaves Beren free to break his oath and still obtain the prize of his labours, since Lúthien declares her determination to stay with him whatever he decides to do. However, it is not within Beren's nature to break his word. He resolves to keep his vow "against his heart" (S, p.177), and is "torn between his oath and his love" (S, p.178). He is encouraged in his decision by Huan's advice that they will have no peace if the oath is not kept. After their escape from Angband, Lúthien again is willing not to return to Doriath, but Beren "could not for long forget his oath to return to Menegroth, nor would he withhold Lúthien from Thingol for ever. For he held by the law of Men, deeming it perilous to set at naught the will of the father, save at the last need; and it seemed also to him unfit that one so royal and fair as Lúthien should live always in the woods... without home or honour or the fair things which are the delight of the queens of the Eldalië. Therefore after a while he persuaded her" (S, p.183). The first reason sounds as if it were specially manufactured for the occasion (it seems like a "last need" situation, although arguably the "law" is intended as another demonstration of respect for individuality, which thus protects the father's rights but is a danger to the daughter's - in any case Beren is admittedly obliged to obey the law since he is in favour of order and authority rather than rebellion and chaos), and while

the second is more plausible, the fact that Beren has to persuade Lúthien argues that the most important motive is the first-named oath. Tolkien adds "So their doom willed it" (S, p.183), but that they are willed to return by their "doom" does not negate the validity of at least one of Beren's motives.

The operation of readily discernible character traits is also evident in Thingol's oaths, which express his personality and reaction to the situation. Thingol swears to his daughter that Beren will not be imprisoned or killed. Despite this, he threatens Beren with death when the latter defies him. Melian, who had foreseen that Beren would come to Doriath and defeat her magical barriers because "'doom greater than my power shall send him'" (S, p.144), reminds her husband of the role of that "doom" which is beyond his control as well as hers: "'not by you... shall Beren be slain; and far and free does his fate lead him in the end, yet it is wound with yours. Take heed!'" (S, p.167). Thingol is too angry and indignant to notice this advice, and prefers to believe that the impossibility of the task he sets will ensure that Beren will not return. When Melian warns the King of the possible consequences of his second oath (that Beren can marry Lúthien upon the delivery of a Silmaril), he replies "'if there were hope or fear that Beren should come ever back alive to Menegroth, he should not have looked again upon the light of heaven, though I had sworn it'" (S, p.168). Thingol also must choose between his love for Lúthien and his oath, and his decision is indicated in the declaration of his willingness to forswear himself if there were any prospect of Beren's return,[25] and his manifest lack of intention of keeping his promise even if Beren

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25. Thingol's selfishness prevents him from seeing that murdering (in effect) the man of his daughter's choice is a peculiar way of demonstrating his affection for her.

keeps his by satisfying the imposed condition. Thingol avoids the loss of his personal integrity only because "he perceived that their doom might not be withstood by any power of the world" (S, p.184). By his demand of the Silmaril "he wrought the doom of Doriath" (S, p.167) as pre-destined by Eru, and yet the fateful demand is comprehensible in terms of Thingol's character and his reaction to the situation.

The development of history is perceived as being the outcome of the combined actions of individuals. As can be seen from these examples, most of the time they are not prevented from behaving "in character" by the fact that their actions have been pre-ordained or are ultimately controlled by Eru. In a very few instances a very few characters are directly manipulated by the cosmic authority, but even in these cases which are the exception rather than the rule, the action which results is an intensification or extreme example of what action could result directly from the personality in question: for example, no one is surprised that Frodo offers to take the Ring at the Council because the offer is within the potential of the personality traits which Frodo has demonstrated.

The possibility of heroism is not mitigated by knowledge of the controlling roles of Eru and the Valar. The Greek and Trojan heroes of Homer and the heroes of north European culture know that they are destined to particular fates which will follow inevitable patterns. Despite this knowledge, the heroes, although they can be resigned, are not defeatist in outlook: they have "faith in the value of doomed resistance" (MC, p.28): that is, resistance which, it has been determined, will not prevail, in a physical sense, over the opposition. Elrond sums up this attitude at the Council: "'there is naught that you can do,

other than to resist, with hope or without it'" (I, p.255).

When the decision has been taken to resist, whatever the outcome, the necessity of making other choices must follow: "existence as myth implies a universe which is finally coherent, which can be understood, in which the acts of an individual, despite his natural impermanence, have some kind of permanent significance [that is, each act has lasting consequences which affect the course of history].... Tolkien presents an imagined world where there are absolute values, no matter what their theological basis and no matter how imperfectly we may realize them. A world where each man must choose the way he will take, not once but constantly, for each moment of life in Tolkien's world involves deliberate choice...."[26] For example, reflecting on his decision to rest instead of pursuing the Orcs unremittingly, Aragorn says "'A vain pursuit from its beginning, maybe, which no choice of mine can mar or mend. Well, I have chosen'" (II, p.28). He realizes that the outcome of the hunt has been decided, but must still choose his course and accept the consequences. Knowing that a pre-destined path lies in front of him does not mean that a character knows what the path is. He does not know what decisions, dangers and pleasures are involved in his fate, or exactly when or where or how death will come. He may be destined to choose rightly or wrongly (in moral terms), but he must choose: "Neither sloth nor unremitting determinism is an excuse."[27] It is the possibility of choice that keeps the characters "alive" and aware of the world in that they are often surprised at the events or places into which they proceed because of their

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26. Bruce A. Beatie, "The Lord of the Rings: Myth, Reality and Relevance", Western Review, 4 (Winter 1967), p.59.

27. David M. Miller, "The Moral Universe of J.R.R. Tolkien", in "The Tolkien Papers", Mankato Studies in English, No.2, Mankato State College Studies, 2, No.1 (February 1967), p.60.

choices, as when Aragorn comments at Isengard "'we meet again at last, where none of us ever thought to come'" (II, p.165).

The dangers of not choosing are demonstrated in the Hobbits' encounter with Old Man Willow, and in the confusion and hesitation of the Company when Aragorn is indecisive because he is doubtful about his own course. In the first case, they enter the forest in a (temporarily successful) effort to elude the Black Riders. However, once inside they do not assert their own capacity to choose strongly enough to prevail against the decision of the tree to trap them. "The directing will of the forest is, as it were, an objectification of the hobbits' own lack of will: they must learn that whatever one does not do for oneself, Sauron, or those equally malicious, will do."[28] In the second instance, the river, like the willow, is a metaphor. Aragorn appreciates Celeborn's gift of boats which "comforted him much, not least because there would now be no need to decide his course for some days" (I, p.384; emphasis added) Aragorn, in effect, lets Celeborn make his decision for him (see also I, pp.383,384-5, for references to Aragorn's hesitation and doubts). They passively allow the river to carry them forward instead of acting on their own initiative: "Aragorn let them drift with the stream as they wished" (I, p.396). They are occasionally prompted by insecurity to move themselves forward (p.397), but Aragorn's lack of a decided plan (for example, they do not proceed a set distance each day) and his ignorance of their future course (both literally and metaphorically) prevent him from exactly evaluating their position. As a result they are nearly betrayed into the clutches of the enemy, who have been more decisive than they have: "'Gollum's doing, I'll be bound,' said Sam to Frodo. 'And a nice place to choose, too. The River seems set on taking us right into their

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28. Helms, p.93.

arms!'" (I, p.402). They save themselves only through frenzied and belated action with the oars. Frodo, left to consider his next move, is forced to choose and take action when pressured by Boromir, who believes (correctly) that "fate" has put the Ring into their hands but that they are making the wrong decision about what to do with it. At the end of the discussion Aragorn declares "'He is the Bearer, and the fate of the Burden is on him. I do not think that it is our part to drive him one way or the other. Nor do I think we should succeed, if we tried. There are other powers at work far stronger'" (I, p.420). Clearly Aragorn realizes the role of the external forces and that Eru is ultimately controlling the situation, yet he does not advocate sitting down and letting Eru make their decisions. He recognizes his previous mistake of leaving their immediate future to the river ("'I am out of my reckoning...I did not know that we had come so far: Anduin flows faster than I thought'" (I, p.402)) and knows that Eru will help them only if they help themselves. He never commits a similar error, and tries to prevent others from doing so, as when he tells Éomer that he brings "'The doom of choice'" (II, p.36) about the war to Théoden, indicates his own decision about the immediate future, and insists that Éomer make up his mind: "'My duty at least is clear, to go on. Come now, son of Éomund, the choice must be made at last'" (II, p.41).

The "good" characters' only source of security is, in the final analysis, faith. They do not know what Eru intends, or how, when, where or by whom the intentions will be shown. They do not even know why Eru's intentions are what they are. During the Last Debate, Gandalf predicts that if Sauron gets the Ring "'your valour is vain, and his victory will be swift and complete: so complete that none can foresee the end of it while this world lasts'" (III, p.155). Obviously Gandalf

hopes that this will not occur, but he does not know. Only Eru knows his own role, and for reasons inscrutable to everyone else he "may even allow evil to triumph in the short term, and these short terms are often anything but short."[29] In such an instance the only consolation and reassurance is the faith that all things work towards the fulfilment of Eru's designs and the eventual re-establishment of order. Tolkien's summary of the truth taught by "The Book of Job" can also be applied to his own works: "When God does appear it is to tell how inscrutable are his person and his designs, and Job falls to silence. This is the book's lesson: faith must remain even when understanding fails."[30] The seeming certainty of loss and defeat does not excuse a loss of faith: "The tragedy of the great temporal defeat remains for a while poignant, but ceases to be finally important. It is no defeat, for the end of the world is part of the design of the Metod, the Arbiter who is above the mortal world" (MC, p.27). In this respect the later Númenoreans fail because they are unable to accept the loss and end of their individual "worlds" to death, despite the Valar's warning: "'The will of Eru may not be gainsaid; and the Valar bid you earnestly not to withhold the trust to which you are called, lest soon it become again a bond by which you are constrained. Hope rather that in the end even the least of your desires shall have fruit. The love of Arda was set in your hearts by Ilúvatar, and he does not plant to no purpose. Nonetheless, many

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29. Kocher, p.48.

30. Introduction to the Book of Job, The Jerusalem Bible, ed. Alexander Jones (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1966), p.728. Some confusion exists on the subject of who wrote the introduction and translated Job. Kilby (p.54) asserts "It is known that Tolkien collaborated in the preparation of the Jerusalem Bible by translating the book of Job into English from what he called a bad literal French version. His keen sense of rightness led him to learn a considerable amount of Hebrew preparatory to his task." J.S. Ryan is also of this opinion: see his Tolkien: Cult or Culture? (Armidale: University of New England, 1969), p.26. However, according to Carpenter (p.274), "his only contribution was to make the original draft of the translation of the Book of Jonah, and his work was extensively revised by other hands before publication." Whatever the facts of the case, the quotation from the introduction to Job is a good expression of Tolkien's beliefs.

ages of Men unborn may pass ere that purpose is made known; and to you it will be revealed and not to the Valar'" (S, p.265). Similarly Denethor is unable to accept the loss of the world he has always known. He loses faith in Eru's order because he perceives that his own order is collapsing and dies in despair as had the "'heathen kings'" (III, p.129) - those who had lost their faith. They lack the confidence of Prince Rilian in Lewis' The Silver Chair: "'Aslan will be our good lord, whether he means us to live or die. And all's one, for that.... Let us descend into the city and take the adventure that is sent us.'"[31] The Númenoreans do not wish to pass the "dim shores of the Outer Sea, whence Men that die set out never to return" (S, p.186), and take the adventure Eru sends them.

An unwillingness to take the "adventure" of the Music as designed and proposed by Eru - in effect, a lack of faith on Melkor's part - is the original cause of the world disruption of which defeat and death are such significant parts. An ordered world wherein everyone, in accord with the decision of the authority's plan and will, would have a definite place with an attached role, and would keep in that place, would reflect the harmonious nature of the proposed Music in which the role of each singer (as assigned by Eru and carried out in accordance with individuals' personality traits) would complement the role of every other singer to create an integrated perfect whole. As noted above, Arda reflects the creative Music, and this means that the progress of the Music can be read as a metaphor or indication of Arda's progress. Arda is established from the beginning as an ordered world in which everyone has an assigned place and role with concomitant duties and rights, and a specified kind and amount of power. Ideally, the world system should be considered as

31. Clive Staples Lewis, The Silver Chair (1953; rpt. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1959), p.172.

a whole with each individual contributing according to his/her character and preferences. In other words, what an individual ought to do is, ideally, evident as being his or her assigned "business". How it is done is determined by the individual's personality and responses to the historical situation. For example, the "business" of a leader or a king remains fairly constant between cultures and throughout time, but obviously Ar-Pharazôn, Eärnur, Théoden and Aragorn are very different kings. In assuming his/her duties, the individual would, in a harmonious system, be satisfying him/herself personally and contributing to the cosmic whole in a positive and willing manner. Everyone would know his/her place in the order and wish to remain in it. Tolkien's comment on the role of the sub-creator can also serve as a comment on the role of the inhabitants of the sub-creation: "So great is the bounty with which he has been treated that he may now, perhaps, fairly dare to guess that... he may actually assist in the effoliation and multiple enrichment of creation" (OFS, p.63), as do the Ainur when, during the Music, Eru encourages them to "'show forth your powers in adorning this theme, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will'" (S, p.15). Because the order of Arda is based upon a respect for individuality (a "part") working harmoniously with a respect for the world (that is, other people and things of the world - the "whole"), each character is obliged to develop self-respect and respect for beings separate from self in such a way and to such an extent that all individual parts fit to make one unified whole.

The relationship between individuality and unity in the cosmos is implied in the ways in which certain people emerge in the narrative and in the ways they are described. For example, in The Silmarillion, in which many of the characters are archetypal figures and often not

emphatically differentiated from each other, it is, in most cases, the more negative (although not "evil" in the sense that Morgoth and Sauron are, totally unredeemed by even courage) Elves who are the most outstanding, just as Melkor is more fully realized than Manwë, or even Ulmo. Fëanor, Eöl, Maeglin and especially Thingol all emerge as more individual than most of the other Elves because they are outside their respective societies. That is, they are not, like (for example) Angrod and Aegnor, or Amrod and Amras, almost interchangeable and nearly indistinguishable. Their significant traits and actions - Fëanor's creation of the Silmarils and rebellion, Eöl's misanthropy and murderously possessive attitude towards others, Maeglin's coldness and treachery, Thingol's efforts to thwart Beren and Lúthien - are all anti-social and thus outstanding. If the ideal social structure of Aman is accepted as peaceful and well-regulated and Fëanor is castigated as a rebel against it, some attention must be given to his actions and motivations in order to show what he does against society and why he does it, while those who remain within the society are defined and fulfilled by their roles and business within it. Eöl, a deliberate outsider, moves away from both Sindarin and Noldorin society; Maeglin rejects Eöl openly and Gondolin in secret. Thingol, intent on keeping Doriath out of a war which, he feels, is none of his or its business, tries to maintain his literal and metaphorical distance from the Noldorin Elves who surround his kingdom and are dedicated (in theory, at least) to destroying Morgoth. Maedhros the responsible eldest brother and Maglor the artistic second brother, although more "positive" than the rest of Fëanor's sons, are exceptional in that they have an individuality that the other five lack because they stand outside the society formed by their "negative" siblings. (Some of Maedhros' younger brothers consider him a "negative" force because of his resignation

of the Noldorin rulership to Fingolfin, which is contrary to their wishes.)

In The Lord of the Rings the descriptions of characters tend to be more individual and varied, but they can operate to promote the theme of unity while conveying the impression of unique separateness. For example, Aragorn, almost the first and certainly the most important Man encountered, is described partly for his own sake, partly because the ambiguity of his appearance and apparent intentions serves to intensify the Hobbits' dread and uncertainty and hint at the large outer world which they are discovering and learning to take their places in, and partly because he serves as a touchstone for every other important Man (and several minor ones) encountered in the story. For instance, in sharp contrast is bustling Butterbur, "a short fat man with a bald head and a red face" (I, p.164). He is as ignorant and parochial as the short, fat, hairy, red-cheeked Hobbits: the inhabitants of both Bree and the Shire regard each other as aliens, but they are even more suspicious of the mysterious Strider who belongs to the dark wild "outside" world. Butterbur has been taught to distrust Rangers, while the Hobbits have learned to fear Black Riders, and they are temporarily in league against the powerful unknown force who is intent on making them face unwelcome facts from "outside" so that they can, in their own particular ways, contribute to the preservation of both the familiar and the strange, and to the preservation of a world in which individual entities are allowed to be themselves. In another small but telling case, Aragorn is indirectly related to two of Faramir's followers, Mablung and Damrod, who are pale, dark-haired, grey-eyed, have proud sad faces and are "Dúnedain of the South" and "Rangers of Ithilien" (II, p.267). It is significant that the two Rangers of Ithilien bear more resemblance to the Ranger of the North (who is pale, dark-haired, grey-eyed, proud and sad) rather than to Boromir, who is a fairly atypical Númenorean. By

implication the Damrod-Mablung connection also links Faramir, the leader of the Rangers of Ithilien, with Aragorn, the leader of the Rangers of the North.

Since Aragorn is the central human "piece" to which the other human "pieces" must relate, he is used as a comparison and contrast in describing Boromir, Denethor, Faramir, Éomer, and, obliquely, Théoden. For example, Boromir, who is shorter than Aragorn but "broader and heavier in build" (I, p.305), is thus better at clearing the snow on Caradhras. He prefaces his labours by commenting "'when heads are at a loss bodies must serve'" (I, p.305). In fact Boromir rarely uses his head and is constantly relying on his body, unlike Aragorn, who uses both. The proverb's addendum "'as they say in my country'" indicates his provincialism and narrowness of outlook. Unlike Aragorn, the other members of the Company, and even the supposedly less sophisticated Éomer and Théoden, Boromir does not try, or even wish, to broaden his outlook and become a member of the world community.

When Pippin first sees Denethor, "he was reminded not so much of Boromir as of Aragorn" (III, p.27), an observation prefaced by the conversation between himself and Gandalf about the two latter Men in relation to the Steward. Denethor has Aragorn's intelligence and foresight, and the political power which rightfully belongs to the king. Unfortunately, he also has Boromir's narrow attitude, dedication to power, and dislike of being in a subordinate position. While Boromir's over-confidence in his physical strength redeems him and enables him to achieve a conventionally heroic death after his fall through excessive ambition, Denethor's over-confidence in his mental strength drives him (with a little help from Sauron) to Arda's equivalent of damnation through despair, madness, desertion of duty, attempted filicide, and

successful suicide.

When Pippin first sees Faramir, he compares him also to Aragorn: "Here was one with an air of high nobility such as Aragorn at times revealed, less high perhaps, yet also less incalculable and remote: one of the Kings of Men born into a later time, but touched with the wisdom and sadness of the Elder Race" (III, p.84). Faramir is revealed as a lesser version of Aragorn; he becomes Steward to the King, and marries a woman who is originally in love with Aragorn. The comparison made by Pippin (and Frodo, II, pp.274, 280) of Faramir with Boromir indicates that the former has his brother's good qualities undiluted by the bad. Sam's comparison of Faramir with Gandalf (II, p.291) and Pippin's with Elves (the "Elder Race") are favourable indicatives of Faramir's nature in that they connect him with the Elves (both comparisons also show the Hobbits' growth of outlook, perception and experience from their first suspicious reaction to Aragorn in Bree).

Aragorn's first meeting with Éomer begins with the former apparently at the latter's mercy (Éomer, on horseback, levels his spear at Aragorn) and is climaxed with Éomer's realization of Aragorn's greater power (now on foot, he steps back and looks down). The revelation is made by Aragorn's list of titles and the apparent physical transformation which accompanies it: "He seemed to have grown in stature while Éomer had shrunk; and in his living face they caught a brief vision of the power and majesty of the kings of stone. For a moment it seemed to the eyes of Legolas that a white flame flickered on the brows of Aragorn like a shining crown" (II, p.36; the comment about elvish perception is significant). The discussion of Boromir by the two is particularly noteworthy because of what it reveals about Boromir (Éomer thinks that he

was "'More like to the swift sons of Eorl than to the grave Men of Gondor'" (II, p.38; cf. also p.34)) and because Éomer, like Denethor and Faramir, has characteristics of both Boromir and Aragorn. Éomer as an individual is defined and placed by his relationship with Boromir as well as his relationship with Aragorn, pointing to the various connections between the different "parts" of the whole. Like Boromir, he relies upon his fighting prowess and its attached ethical code rather than intelligence: "'As for myself... I have little knowledge of these deep matters; but I need it not. This I know, and it is enough, that as my friend Aragorn succoured me and my people, so I will aid him when he calls'" (III, p.157; relate to Boromir's complaint at the Council of Elrond "'I do not understand all this'" (I, p.280), his suspicious reaction to Aragorn, and his unenthusiastic response when Aragorn offers to go to Minas Tirith). However, like Aragorn, Éomer (after some initial hesitation) comes to see himself as a member of the world community, rather than thinking (like Boromir and Denethor) in terms of his own country alone.

Théoden is juxtaposed with Aragorn from Éowyn's viewpoint (II, p.128), and the two Men are related in that they are both temporarily displaced kings who become restored to their proper power. The difference is that Théoden "'rose out of the shadows to a last fair morning'" (III, p.145) as Aragorn notes, which acts as a precedent and helps to give Aragorn the opportunity to rise "from the shadows" to a first "fair morning" on the throne.[32]

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32. Cf. the verse about Aragorn: "A light from the shadows shall spring" (I, pp.182,261). The juxtaposition from Éowyn's viewpoint is significant in that she is being repressed by social restrictions which her culture has placed upon women, and Aragorn's appearance provides an added incentive for her to disregard the barriers, emerge from the shadows (cf. her disguise and revelation of her identity at sunrise), and contribute to the development of world events by being more fully "herself" than she has been permitted to be.

By observing these juxtapositions the reader can perceive an implicit order in which the secondary and minor human characters relate to the central human character, and thus realize more completely their individual roles in the struggle for world order.

When a character's interest in and respect for individuality becomes too concerned with self and those people, things or the environment related to self, and not concerned enough with the selfhood of others, order is disrupted. The history of Arda develops through a long series of discordant events which occur when people (usually, like Melkor, powerful and gifted) become dissatisfied with their Eru-given places and try to change them for the "better" and increase the importance of their own contributions to the whole which they are trying to re-arrange. Others, because of force, fear, trickery or persuasion, also leave their places and contribute to the disorder. Those loyal to Eru's design struggle to restore order by maintaining or achieving their correct places and helping other people to do the same, which necessitates the removal of the disruptors from their usurped places. In the following chapters the nature of "place" and the struggles concerning it in Arda will be considered.

Chapter III - The Relationship between Order and Heroism

Because the world has been disrupted by Melkor's initial rebellion and his example is followed by others throughout history, there are quests and wars in which characters are called upon to fulfil their potential for "heroism", in the conventional sense of the term. The quests and wars, acted in the foreground of history, are necessary events caused by the struggle between "good" and "evil" characters attempting to gain what they believe to be their proper places in pursuit of their individual visions of the correct and desirable order in accordance with or in defiance of what is believed to be Eru's conception of the correct and desirable order. By fulfilling their potential for heroism in quests and wars the "good" characters assert themselves and aid others to be themselves, that is, "other" or separate individuals, although the "good" characters may not consciously articulate their motives as such, or may serve the cause of cosmic order without realizing that they are doing so. In an unfallen world the inhabitants would contribute to the development of history as individuals, but no one would be conventionally heroic (as are, for example, Beowulf or Roland) since that particular form of heroism or heroic behaviour exists only when and where there is disorder. It is a means towards an end - achievement of or return to one's own place and a restoration of order.

Heroism can be defined as a person's "commitment to a greater vision of life than himself...."[1] In this sense the Ainur were heroic before Melkor thought of disrupting the Music to increase his own role and make the Music his own, because while each asserted himself as an individual and

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1. Robley Evans, J.R.R. Tolkien (New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1972), p.201.

fulfilled his potential through his own ideas, he was also committed to the Music as a unified production. They are "heroic" through the art which is (at that point) the business of their lives. In the same way Fëanor, for example, is "heroic" in making the Silmarils, originally intended for the benefit of all, and it is this form of "heroism" that he abandons by rebelling and taking arms against Morgoth, in an ultimately useless gesture and to the loss of everyone: "The works of wonder for the glory of Arda that he might otherwise have wrought only Manwë might in some measure conceive" (S, p.98).

While the Ainur are "heroic" by being themselves before the Music is disrupted, after Melkor's rebellion the "good" Ainur who recognize Eru's authority are forced to be "heroic" in the conventional sense in order to be themselves and to prevent Melkor from denying the individuality of others. It is necessary to remember that Melkor is the strongest and most powerful of the Ainur and has a multitude of talents, and that those loyal to the original design of the Music do not know Eru's purposes: whether he will intervene on their behalf, or allow them to defeat or be defeated by Melkor without giving them any help. This uncertainty remains even after Eru re-directs them twice, as they cannot be sure that he will continue to do so. As G.K. Chesterton points out in "The Ethics of Elfland",[2] the repetition of an event does not guarantee that the event will continue to take place, an opinion with which Tolkien agreed (see OFS, p.60).

Therefore, the pattern for two different kinds of heroism or heroic behaviour is established in the Music and is repeated throughout the history of Arda. There is what might be described as artistic heroism, which

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2. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, "The Ethics of Elfland", in Orthodoxy (New York: John Lane Co., and London: The Bodley Head, 1909), pp.81-118.

is evident in the art of living, of being oneself and carrying out one's role through some form of "making", whether it is creating Silmarils or growing potatoes or writing books or administering official and legal processes. This is the heroism which is practised by members of a relatively stable society, such as Aman during Melkor's imprisonment or the Shire before the War of the Ring. For most people, even during times of unrest or upheaval, it is the only heroism which they ever experience. The other kind of heroism is the conventional heroism of those few who leave their homes to participate in quests and wars so that the many who remain at home are allowed to continue being "heroic" by being themselves. It is a reaction by a chosen few to the demands of a disrupted situation. The continuing success of artistic heroism depends upon the success of conventional heroes on those occasions when it is necessary for them to be heroic. The inevitability of those occasions also becomes an intrinsic part of the Music's design through Melkor's aggressive self-assertion and possessiveness. That a "good" character in a situation demanding conventional heroism responds and fulfils his potential for conventional heroism is often (not always) a force for order. However, if there were no disorder, no one would be called upon to be conventionally heroic.[3]

The behavioural tendencies towards possessiveness, pride and heroism

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3. Carpenter quotes or paraphrases Tolkien as saying "'the job of fighting demands a quality of daring and individual prowess in arms that I'd have thought was a real problem for a warless world fully to satisfy.'" See Humphrey Carpenter, The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams and their Friends (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1978), p.150. Hereafter cited as Inklings. Presumably this means a fallen world with no war, rather than a world that has never fallen, and that the fighting quality is introduced or "built into" certain individuals after the fall (the potential to rebel and fall also having been introduced by Eru) has produced situations wherein conventional heroism is necessary or desirable to restore order.

can be seen to "shade" into each other, and there are positive and negative aspects to all three. Pride involves an egotism or assertion of self which can become excessive and not allow self-assertion to anyone else. Possessions are not, in themselves, "bad": everyone has a claim to something as being part of his particular and unique role, and therefore legitimately his own. Part of the order-restoring process is the return of possessions to their rightful owners, as indicated, for example, in Gandalf's ceremonial surrender of the palantír to Aragorn. The negative aspect of possession is evident when a character wishes to make everyone and everything outside himself his own, allowing no separate identities. Conventional heroism is an assertion of self undertaken in order to achieve one's proper place and its accompanying possessions, and in doing so to create an ordered world in which the only kind of heroism which is either necessary or practised in artistic heroism. That is, the hero's life cannot assume a "normal" pattern, involving marriage, children, old age and a peaceful death, while the world is in disorder (or, to put it another way, a hero who leads a "normal" life affirms that the world is ordered). However, conventional heroism can also be a negative force when it is inappropriate to the situation (as is Fëanor's determination to pursue Morgoth) or when it is excessive; that is, when a character asserts himself too strongly, even with the best of intentions, in circumstances demanding self-restraint.

Those persons who rebel against the intended nature of the world because of possessiveness and pride find, however, that they are

ultimately defeated even when they achieve what they desire.[4] A person who wants a material object because he regards it as "his" (part of himself) becomes bound to and imprisoned or enslaved by it so that his actions are determined by the object - an "other" power despite his efforts to own it - rather than by himself, and so loses himself. Melkor desires Arda and, like the other Valar, he must perforce allow his power to be "contained and bounded in the World" (S, p.20). However, unlike them, he becomes bound to that part of the world he tries to hold for his own. Fëanor, whose "heart... was fast bound" (S, p.67) to the Silmarils, is constrained by the tie to leave his place in Aman and pursue them to Middle-earth despite all warnings. Lotho is literally imprisoned in the much-desired Bag End, and Gollum is compelled to follow the Ring.

That the theme of possessiveness and the "possession" of those who are possessive is an important factor in the order-disorder struggle is evident even in The Hobbit. In the latter part of the book the restoration of order and return of everyone to their correct places - the Dwarf lord to the Mountain, Bard to the lordship of Dale, the Elven-king to Mirkwood, and Bilbo to the Shire - depend on the distribution of the treasure, possession of which has motivated the Dwarves from the beginning of the expedition. Bard claims a fair proportion of the hoard, indicates the situation will not become peaceful and ordered until it is surrendered, and explains his reasons. "Now these were fair words

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4. Cf. Clive Staples Lewis, The Magician's Nephew (1955; rpt. The Bodley Head, 1960), p.173: "'All get what they want: they do not always like it.'" Aslan is referring to the Witch, whose situation has much in common with Tolkien's "evil" characters. She gains her desire of "'unwearying strength and endless days like a goddess. But length of days with an evil heart is only length of misery and already she begins to know it.'" Similarly Wentworth, in Charles Williams' Descent into Hell (1937; rpt. New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1949), gains what he desires but finds no happiness.

and true, if proudly and grimly spoken; and Bilbo thought that Thorin would at once admit what justice was in them.... But... he did not reckon with the power that gold has upon which a dragon has long brooded, nor with dwarvish hearts. Long hours in the past days Thorin had spent in the treasury, and the lust of it was heavy upon him" (H, pp.242-43). Róac (correctly) warns "'The treasure is likely to be your death, though the dragon is no more!' But Thorin was not moved" (H, p.245). Thorin even considers breaking his word in his fanatical determination to keep all the treasure, and treats Bilbo so unjustly over the matter of the Arkenstone that his own followers are ashamed. Gandalf rebukes (and warns) him "'You are not making a very splendid figure as King under the Mountain.... But things may change yet'" (H, p.253).

Bilbo, along with Gandalf, is the only character who keeps clear of the scramble for the treasure and puts a proper value on it:[5] "'I would rather old Smaug had been left with all the wretched treasure, than that these vile creatures should get it, and poor old Bombur and Balin and Fili and Kili and all the rest should come to a bad end; and Bard too, and the Lake-men and the merry elves'" (H, p.262; see also pp.196, 238, 249-50). The Elvenking shares this view to a limited extent: "'Long will I tarry, ere I begin this war for gold'" (H, p. 256). Although he has left his realm and seems prepared to engage his people in some kind of conflict (the Elves had gone in arms towards the Mountain until diverted by the Lake-men's appeal for help), he is not willing to introduce total anarchy in pursuit of wealth. However, he has a "weakness... for treasure... and though his hoard was rich, he was ever eager for more, since he had not yet as great a treasure as

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5. For more discussion on this point, see G. Monsman, "The Imaginary World of J.R.R. Tolkien", South Atlantic Quarterly, 69 (Spring, 1970), 264-78. It should be noted that for Bilbo to decline any reward, as he tries to do, would be as unfair and "wrong" as to claim too much.

other elf-lords of old" (H, p.156). Therefore he is reluctant to give up his claim on the treasure outright, and hopes that "'something'" (H, p.256) will occur to make battle unnecessary.[6] "Something", in the shape of Thorin's death, does occur, and it is only when he is dying that he learns what Bilbo already knows: "'If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world'" (H, p.264). It is only with the deaths of those who over-value possessions, such as Thorin and the Master of Esgaroth (who also abdicates his place and tries to keep treasure not belonging to him and finds, too late, that it will cost him his life), that order can be re-established.

Through death, Thorin escapes a version of the Sauron-Ring relationship, where "the Lord of the Ring" is in fact so much a part of "his" possession that his life depends upon it. "The Ring is the ultimate danger because it embodies the final possessiveness, the ultimate in power that binds things apart from ourselves to ourselves."[7] As Gollum crudely but accurately puts it, "'He'll eat us all, if He gets it, eat all the world'" (II, p.245).[8] The Ring, like the Silmarils when possessed by "negative" characters, illustrates Blake's maxim: "The bounded is loathed by its possessor."[9]

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6. In fact Thranduil seems to have neither legal nor moral claim upon the hoard, since we are explicitly told that Thorin's family was not involved in the ancient treasure feud (H, p.156). Not even Bard can offer a reason why the Elves should get any of the wealth, although he argues that they have a right to be present because of friendship.

7. Roger Sale, "Tolkien and Frodo Baggins", in Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press 1968), p.264. Hereafter cited as TC.

8. A metaphor which is literally true in the ambition of Ungoliant and Shelob. They wish to make everything part of themselves and, like their "masters" (or allies) Morgoth and Sauron, devour the world.

9. William Blake, "There Is No Natural Religion", [b] IV, in The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, ed. David Erdman, rev. (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1970).

The possessive attitude, usually combined with a disproportionate estimate of self-importance, is seen in relationships between people as well as between people and things, and in such cases also works towards disorder. Thingol tries to exercise what he regards as his justified rights and wishes by keeping Lúthien in her place as his daughter despite her rights and wishes. Eöl, whose lack of interest in people is indicated by his misanthropy, traps Aredhel when she strays into Nan Elmoth where he has made his home, and forces her to remain as his wife, an action later described as a theft (S, p.136). Eöl regards Aredhel and their son Maeglin as his possessions, for which reason he forbids both of them to go to Aredhel's brother Turgon in Gondolin. When they defy him he follows them and tries to kill Maeglin rather than allowing Turgon to "keep" him. Maeglin inherits the tendency towards possessiveness so far as to consider his parents only as sources of useful information while he is in Nan Elmoth, Turgon as a means of and an opposition to his advance in Gondolin, and Turgon's daughter Idril as a desirable object able to help him to a position on the throne. The possessive outlook is, of course, the only one which Morgoth, Sauron and eventually Saruman are capable of holding. Lewis' remark about witches can apply: "They are not interested in things or people unless they can use them; they are terribly practical."[10]

The parallel cases of Fëanor and Denethor demonstrate the possibilities of chaos which become evident when an excessively self-conscious character views other people and things only in relation to himself. Despite the fact that Finwë favours Fëanor over the other members of his family ("of all whom he loved Fëanor had ever the chief share of his

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10. Lewis, The Magician's Nephew, p.73.

thought". (S, p.65)). Fëanor is nevertheless discontented when Finwë marries again because of the competition for his father's affection. Melkor is able to use the resulting hostility between the family members to further his own plans. When Fëanor speaks against the Valar and first proposes to leave Valinor, Fingolfin very rightly asks Finwë: "'King and father, wilt thou not restrain the pride of our brother, Curufinwë...? By what right does he speak for all our people, as if he were King?'" (S, pp.69-70). Fëanor, who uses his father's over-indulgence to usurp, however unintentionally, Finwë's place as leader and spokesman for the Noldor, immediately ascribes similar motives to Fingolfin: "'My half-brother would be before me with my father, in this as in all other matters.... Get thee gone, and take thy due place!'" (S, p.70). Fëanor is jealous of what he regards as his rights and possessions because he feels that not everyone shares his ideas as to what those rights and possessions are. Consequently he is insecure, and is quick to assert himself when he believes his importance is not automatically conceded by those around him. He goes so far as to threaten Fingolfin with his sword: "'Try but once more to usurp my place and the love of my father, and maybe this will rid the Noldor of one who seeks to be the master of thralls!'" (S, p.70). When Fëanor is banished with the Valar's advice to remember who and what he is during his exile, he is joined by Finwë, leaving Fingolfin to rule the Noldor. Instead of curbing Fëanor's aggressive tendencies and putting him in his place, Finwë deserts his own place in Tirion to side implicitly with the wrong-doer and, in effect, agrees to be ruled by him and behave as if he were Fëanor's possession, existing only in relation to him. He places his obligations to Fëanor before his obligations to everyone else, including Manwë in his efforts to make peace: "'While the ban lasts upon Fëanor my son, that

he may not go to Tirion, I hold myself unkinged, and I will not meet my people'" (S, p.75). It is because he is in Formenos where he does not belong rather than in Tirion where he does, that Finwë is killed. Fingolfin, already holding his father's place as ruler because of the latter's abdication, tries to fulfil Finwë's responsibility to resolve the family division in so far as he is able by offering reconciliation with Fëanor, but his well-meant gesture of subordination works against him at the time of the rebellion when he finds that he has put himself under the authority of one who refuses to recognize the authority of the Valar or of Eru's order.[11]

When Fëanor becomes King of the Noldor it is clear that the course of action which would be followed by a beneficent and conscientious ruler would be to try to correct the dissatisfaction he has helped to arouse in his people, sincerely reconcile himself with his half-brothers and their families, and leave the Valar to deal with Melkor as a renegade of their own order. Instead of closing the divisions he widens them by agitating conflicting loyalties and wishes. He reacts as if Finwë's death and the theft of the Silmarils affect him exclusively, and there is a strong element of egotism in his grief, in that his attitude is "If I had been there, the results would have been different" (see S, p.79). However, he does not hesitate to use the common loss as a method of stirring up his subjects to the point that they are willing to

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11. This, of course, is one of the problems of an authoritarian hierarchy, in a fallen world, in that "good" characters are sometimes faced with the choice of either denying the system or obeying a leader of doubtful quality. The same problem occurs, for example, in Prince Caspian, when one of the Dwarves questions an order of debatable wisdom given by the young, untried and inexperienced Caspian, and is promptly squashed by the authoritarian Glenstorm who recommends "'Do as you're told.'" See Clive Staples Lewis, Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1951), p.80.

leave Aman, go against the Valar and follow him to Middle-earth: "'Vengeance calls me hence, but even were it otherwise I would not dwell longer in the same land with the kin of my father's slayer and the thief of my treasure. Yet I am not the only valiant in this valiant people. And have ye not all lost your King? And what else have ye not lost, cooped here in a narrow land between the mountains and the sea?'" (S, p.82). Fëanor has contributed heavily to these disasters and the disruption of order by getting out of place, but instead of acknowledging his responsibility and attempting to restore order in his role of King, he urges his subjects to continue and intensify the rebellion. He regards them as weapons to be used in his personal vendetta against Morgoth. This attitude extends even to his sons, whom at his death he lays under an obligation to pursue the war although he now realizes that the Valar were correct in their prediction that the Noldor could not defeat Morgoth.

Denethor, like Fëanor, suffers from a distorted perspective and is too interested in his own importance and the possessions which attend his position, and is quite uninterested in the individuality of others. Of his two sons he prefers Boromir because he accepts Denethor's authority, as parent and Steward, unquestioningly. On the other hand, Faramir realizes that while Denethor has the highest geographical, political and social position in Minas Tirith, he is nevertheless not omnipotent. Therefore Faramir is interested in learning what he can from others, and "welcomed Gandalf at such times as he came to the City, and he learned what he could from his wisdom; and in this as in many other matters he displeased his father" (III, p.337). Denethor, already fretted by Faramir's refusal to be completely and unquestioningly subordinated to his authority, resents what he regards as Gandalf's intrusion

into his spheres of authority, both as a parent and as a politician.

Denethor, like Fëanor in similar circumstances, reacts as if the loss of Boromir affects him alone, and tries to re-assert his rights over his remaining son by sending him out of Minas Tirith into the field again, although the common consensus is that "'The Lord drives his son too hard, and now he must do the duty of two, for himself and for the one that will not return'" (III, p.89). Faramir's reply to Denethor indicates that he has all but given up the attempt to be himself and is prepared to "become" Boromir even if it involves a possibly suicidal obedience: "'I do not oppose your will, sire. Since you are robbed of Boromir, I will go and do what I can in his stead - if you command it'" (III, p.90). Denethor has nearly driven him to the despair which eventually contributes to his own suicide,[12] and Gandalf must interfere to reassure Faramir about his own worth.

Denethor's grasp on his duty to his country and people slips dangerously when he learns of Boromir's death: "'though all the signs forebode that the doom of Gondor is drawing nigh, less now to me is that darkness than my own darkness'" (III, p.27). When he does turn to considering the war, it is evident that he regards Sauron as his personal adversary (cf. III, p.92), believes that his country is the only force worthy of notice, and thinks of everyone, up to and including the members of his family, as tools to be used in a kind of vast personal combat. When Faramir is seriously wounded, Denethor, in an excess of

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12. It should be noted that Boromir also succumbs, in a sense, to despair, in that he believes the West is lost if Frodo attempts to take the Ring to Mordor, and his last defence of Merry and Pippin can be considered, strictly speaking, as suicidal.

useless remorse and premature grief at the thought of losing his last son (emphasis on the possessive), completely abandons his social and political responsibilities in a belated and futile effort to fulfil the paternal role he had neglected. Pippin very correctly concludes that Faramir "'needs medicine more than tears'" (III, p.100) and that "'the Lord of the City... has fallen before his city is taken. He is fey and dangerous'" (III, p.101). Because Denethor releases Pippin from his service (and thus spares him the dilemma of loyalties to conflicting authorities in which the other servants find themselves), the Hobbit is able to warn Gandalf, who has been forced to take on Denethor's social and political responsibilities. He confronts the Steward and points out that "'the houses of the dead are no place for the living'" (III, p.128) and that, whether Faramir lives or dies, "'your part is to go out to the battle of your City'", adding, as an appeal to Denethor's sense of order and the authority of Eru, "'This you know in your heart'" (III, p.129 ; notice that Denethor moves down from the Steward's chair in the White Tower in the seventh circle, to the tombs in the sixth level, after being defeated by Sauron in the highest tower in an encounter which is the right of the King). Since Denethor's knowledge of Aragorn's existence assures him that he can no longer keep the political authority on which he has based his life and self-image, and Gandalf prevents him from asserting his paternal rights by killing Faramir so that he will not come under the authority of another (either Gandalf or Aragorn), he makes his final gesture of self-assertion and determined (self-) possessiveness by defying the moral authority which forbids suicide (Eru's prohibition of suicide can be inferred from Gandalf's description of self-murderers as "'heathen'" (III, p.129), being allied to Morgoth and Sauron rather than Eru).

Tolkien makes it clear that self-assertion and pride in oneself do not cause disorder *per se*. It is *hubris* - over-ambitious pride based on a lack of self-knowledge which leads a person to think that he is stronger than he is and wish to demonstrate it - that is condemned. In his essay "*Ofermod*" on "The Battle of Maldon", Tolkien refutes W. Ker's translation of lines 89-90 of "The Battle of Maldon", given as "then the earl of his overboldness granted ground too much to the hateful enemy." Tolkien offers his own translation: "The earl in his *overmastering* pride actually yielded ground to the enemy, as he should not have done" ("*Ofermod*", p.22; emphasis added). As the essay explains, this interpretation of the lines supposes that the poet condemns Beorhtnoth's deluded self-confidence and his wish to display the prowess on which the confidence is based. This attitude rules him, and he is enslaved by the desire "to give minstrels matter for mighty songs" (HBB, **1.** 254) for the edification of the present and future generations he is supposed to govern. According to Tolkien's translation of lines 89-90, it is implied that Beorhtnoth cannot even rule himself, and therefore loses control over the situation of which he is supposed to be in charge. He furthers disorder in the order-chaos confrontation by permitting the Danes to cross the bridge. His chivalric (rather than heroic) pride rules him, and through it he loses his place and admits the Danes to a place they should not occupy. He, like Beowulf, treats his followers as possessions or extensions of self (which is what they agree to function as by obeying his authority, while expecting their "head" to treat them responsibly) so that "by one man's will many must woe endure."[13] Beorhtnoth and Beowulf both lack self-mastery and die for it, and because of them their realms are thrown into disorder and their people

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13. This is Tolkien's translation of *Beowulf*, **11.** 3077-78, quoted in "*Ofermod*", p.24.

must perforce suffer with them. And Melkor, like Beorthnoth and Beowulf, is interested in self-assertion and self-glorification at the expense of others, treats his followers as possessions, tries to ensure that his already prominent role is given what he believes to be the correct amount of attention, loses (or abdicates) his place and its responsibilities and privileges because he is mastered by his pride, and disrupts the larger order in pursuit of his desires.

The maintenance of justified pride without slipping into hubris and allowing pride to become master is dependent on self-knowledge. The characters who are able to keep their sense of inner proportion can do so because they know themselves and are secure in their own identities. They do not need constant praise (however deserved) to reassure them about their own praiseworthiness. These characters recognize that they are parts of the whole, and have a place to which they belong in the whole. By doing their assigned "business" properly they are able to assert themselves as individuals within the established order. Therefore, justified pride is potent in the face of unjustified contempt, the product of ignorance and excessive pride, as when Bilbo asserts himself by volunteering to accompany the Dwarves, Beren defies Thingol, and Pippin is irritated by Denethor's scorn into offering his service. The characters who possess the security of self-knowledge and justified pride realize that humility and the desire to serve those weaker or less well-off than themselves complement their self-esteem: they love their neighbours as well as themselves. These people accept the privileges of their elevated status and greater power, but they also accept the responsibilities which go with the privileges. Moreover, the self-knowledgeable characters are able to recognize their dependence on others, instead of trying, like Melkor, to be "self-possessed" and independent.

For example, Beren asks for Finrod's help; Eärendil, in contrast to his ancestors, knows that Elves and Men cannot defeat Morgoth alone and asks the Valar for help; Bilbo recognizes his own limitations and has no illusions about his ability to kill Smaug; Treebeard and the Ents can defeat Orcs, but he acknowledges that Saruman is beyond his power and that he needs Gandalf's help, who in turn asks for the Huorns' aid at Helm's Deep; Merry (on the ride to Minas Tirith), Pippin (in Minas Tirith) and Sam (in Minas Morgul) are all acutely aware of their own limitations; and it has been said that "Frodo's greatness lies in his ability to know this [recognize his comparative helplessness], to gain and seek the help of others because he cannot move alone."[14] These people realize that all "good" characters (and ultimately all "evil" beings as well) contribute both to the individual successes of those outside themselves and to the establishment of order. In a more universal context, the self-knowledgeable characters also recognize (implicitly) the role of Eru, as Gandalf does when he says that "'it is given to me to see many things far off'" (III, p.139); immediately after, Aragorn speaks of "'all such power and skill as is given to me'" (cf. also Bilbo's acknowledgment of Gandalf's statement that Bilbo's adventures and "lucky" escapes were not "'managed...just for your sole benefit"' (H, pp.278-79)).

The disordering effects of overmastering pride and greedy selfishness are evident throughout the history of the world because of the pattern established by Melkor's rebellion against Eru's order. For example, Thingol, like Melkor (and Fëanor and Denethor), tends to regard people as possessions rather than as separate beings, and has an inaccurate and inflated idea of who and what he is. Also like Melkor (and Fëanor) he is possessed by the Silmaril: "Thingol's thought turned

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14. Sale, p.279.

unceasingly to the jewel of Fëanor, and became bound to it, and he liked not to let it rest even behind the doors of his inmost treasury; and he was minded now to bear it with him always, waking and sleeping" (S, p.232). The Dwarves re-fashioning the Nauglamír as a setting for it are also attracted to the gem, "for such was its power" (S, p.189), and when they haughtily claim the Nauglamír Thingol completely loses his self-control: "in his wrath and pride he gave no heed to his peril, but spoke to them in scorn, saying: 'How do ye of uncouth race dare to demand aught of me, Elu Thingol, Lord of Beleriand, whose life began by the waters of Cuiviénen years uncounted ere the fathers of the stunted people awoke?' And standing tall and proud among them he bade them with shameful words be gone unrequited out of Doriath" (S, p.233). His wish to keep his daughter as a possession and his contempt for Men as "other" than Elves brings Thingol the Silmaril in exchange for Lúthien, and he changes his opinion about Men: Beren becomes his son-in-law and thus a member of the family. He can therefore be accounted a "part" of Thingol; later, the King makes Túrin his foster son as a substitute for the daughter and son-in-law he loses to death because of his pride and possessiveness, and Túrin thus also becomes a member of the family. However, Thingol is as prejudiced against the Dwarves on the subject of alienness as he had previously been against the Edain and for the same reasons: because they are "other" than Elves and "other" than his own family, have none of the attributes of either group, and therefore (according to his theory) deserve no consideration. When the Dwarves demand a treasure to which they have no more right of possession than Thingol himself, he reacts in exactly the same manner as he had reacted to Beren when the latter wished to "steal" Thingol's treasure Lúthien. Through his original demand for the Silmaril "he

wrought the doom of Doriath, and was ensnared within the curse of Mandos" (S, p.167). Through his determination to keep it he is the immediate cause of Doriath's doom and his own.

Considering Thingol's record, it is not surprising that his foster son Túrin develops undesirable attitudes under his supervision. Saeros, like Maeglin under similar circumstances, resents Túrin's position as "son" to the King, and his insult to Túrin demonstrates his scorn for him as "other" than Elf and a native of Doriath: "'If the Men of Hithlum are so wild and fell, of what sort are the women of that land? Do they run like deer clad only in their hair?'" (S, p.199). To a self-controlled and self-confident individual, this sort of remark would be too ridiculous to merit retort. However, Túrin responds in the conventionally heroic manner, which provokes Saeros to try and kill him. When Túrin accidentally causes his death in the struggle between them, he refuses Thingol's pardon "in the pride of his heart" (S, p.201). This response indicates that he does not believe he has any need of pardon, since his act was justified. This reasoning (if such a description may be used) is also based on the code of conventional heroism, but it does not take into account the fact that he has broken Doriath's law, gone against the King's authority, and disrupted social order, and requires a pardon if he is to return within the law, the King's authority be upheld, and order restored. Túrin's refusal is a rejection of all three and an implication that he considers himself under no obligation to obey the conventions followed by others. He in effect goes outside the law and leaves his place in the social order.

Túrin continues his life as an outlaw in the wild (a metaphor for disorder which is literally true) which, as Beleg tells the King, is not the right place for him. This period of his life gives him an opportunity to demonstrate that, like Thingol, he has an unhealthy

contempt for others simply because they are "other". Túrin and the outlaws who follow him attack the Dwarf Mîm and his two sons without provocation, and kill one of them. When the captured Mîm pleads for his life and offers a ransom, "Túrin pitied Mîm, and spared him" (S, p.202) - not notably magnanimous conduct under the circumstances. The outlaws move into Mîm's halls at his invitation because Túrin reminds him of a "'dwarf-lord of old'" (S, p.203; Mîm is impressed by Túrin's generosity in offering a weregild for his slain son if he ever comes into any wealth). Mîm informs Túrin in no uncertain terms that he hates Elves, partly because they are alien (the Dwarves, says Tolkien, "loved none but themselves" (S, p.204)), and partly due to a history of feuding between the two groups. Despite this Túrin asks Beleg to stay with them, and ignores the objections of his host: "Túrin paid now little heed to the Dwarf" (S, p.205), although previously he had listened to what tales or information Mîm had had to tell. Because Túrin leaves his place as a "guest", Mîm furthers the possibility of disorder introduced by Beleg's presence and rejects his role as "host" by betraying the intruders.

Escorted by Gwindor to Nargothrond, Túrin again does not keep in his place as a guest. He gradually becomes the ruler of Nargothrond. He does not adapt to the guerrilla warfare used by the inhabitants, and begins to insist on "brave strokes and battles in the open; and his counsels weighed with the King ever the longer the more" (S, p.211). It is due to Túrin's concern with honour in warfare and preference for conventional heroism - "'Thy prowess and thy pride'" (S, p.213), as Gwindor informs him - that "Nargothrond was revealed to the wrath and hatred of Morgoth" (S, p.211) and its destruction assured. Túrin is not notable for his intelligence, but he apparently thinks that he can and should dictate policy instead of confining himself to his area of

excellence or "business" (fighting). He is not content with assuming a high place in the King's counsels, but, accustomed to leading from his experience with the outlaws, takes Orodreth's place and becomes the Lord of Nargothrond in all but name. Ulmo sends a message to Círdan: "'"Say therefore to the Lord of Nargothrond: Shut the doors of the fortress and go not abroad. Cast the stones of your pride into the loud river, that the creeping evil may not find the gate."'" Túrin is unimpressed with this advice, apparently thinking that he knows better: "Túrin would by no means hearken to these counsels, and least of all would he suffer the great bridge to be cast down; for he was become proud and stern, and would order all things as he wished" (S, p.212). The Elves listen to him more readily because he looks very much like an Elf (and of course he is familiar with elvish customs due to his upbringing in Doriath), so much so that they name him Adanedhel (Elf-Man), and they disregard Gwindor's more cautious approach because he has become weak and haggard, or un-elvish. The result of Túrin's pride and unjustified self-confidence in areas in which he is not strong is the destruction of Nargothrond by Morgoth's forces.

Arriving in Brethil, Túrin once more usurps the place of the community's leader, for whom he feels an unjustified contempt on the score of his lameness, presumably because it prevents him from being a great warrior. As indicated by his conduct in Doriath, the wild, and Nargothrond, Túrin can understand and therefore empathize with only conventionally heroic behaviour and has no value for those, like Mîm or the guerrilla Elves or Brandir, who are other than conventionally heroic. Just prior to his murder of Brandir, "he spoke evilly to Brandir, calling him Club-foot" (S, p.224). Name-calling, and on such (to modern thought) superficial grounds, is, perhaps, part of the heroic code (as shown in

the sagas, for example), but the circumstances make it particularly petty behaviour.

At the very end of his life, after he has lost everyone and everything, there is an indication that Túrin finally understands the comparative value of his pride and the limitations of the heroic code which he has followed all his life and which have caused so much disaster. When the Elves learn that he has killed Glaurung, "they marvelled, and gave him great praise; but he cared nothing for it, and said: 'This only I ask: give me news of my kin'" (S, p.225). After years of living as an outlaw in the wild, and as an usurper in Nargothrond and Brethil, he finally feels a genuine interest in his family and his place within it. It is, however, far too late for the results of his thoughtless egotism and selfishness to be undone. Glaurung's epithets "'Thankless fosterling, outlaw, slayer of thy friend, thief of love, usurper of Nargothrond, captain foolhardy, and deserter of thy kin'" (S, p.213; other unflattering descriptions could be, and eventually are, added, on p.223) are harsh but not undeserved, and the misery, destruction and far-reaching disorder that he creates for himself and others are directly ascribable to unjustified pride showing itself as unmerited self-confidence in the areas of wisdom and judgment, and unjustified contempt for others in their attempts to be themselves and perform their "business" in their own areas of excellence (that is, his failure to acknowledge the artistic heroism of contributing to world order by living orderly, "ordinary" lives in their proper places).

Túrin's pride and unthinking responses to situations in which he finds himself make him one of Tolkien's most conventionally heroic characters, and this, in fact, is one of his problems. Because heroic

behaviour is adopted for a purpose in Arda, no one has any business to pursue heroism as an end in itself, or, to put it another way, to try to be a full-time "professional" hero, as, for example, in Beowulf, who consistently practises the heroic code and seeks for ways in which to glorify himself and those who are closely connected with him such as Hrothgar, and to gain treasure. Several of Tolkien's characters in addition to Túrin come close to this model because their energies are mis-directed. For no good reason Túrin begins his outlawry in resentment, as indicated in his alias of "Neithan, the Wronged" (S, p.200), and turns his great fighting ability on everyone indiscriminately. It is not until Beleg arrives and provides guidance that he revises his practices, if not his attitudes. Fëanor elects to pursue Morgoth when he would have been better employed exercising his artistic talents. Before open warfare is declared by Sauron, Boromir's energy is directed exclusively towards becoming a great warrior. This is a useful accomplishment when an outlet is provided, but because arms and fighting are the only subjects he knows, he lacks the judgment to perceive that they are not always what is required. (It cannot be argued that his life is, in effect, a training for the war and since this took up all his time his lack of development in other areas is excusable, because Faramir is able to become a great warrior and thinking individual at the same time.) Accustomed to being first in arms due to ability and first in command due to his position as the Steward's heir, he cannot accept direction when it is necessary to do so. King Eärnur, whom Boromir resembles (III, p.337) is even more unfortunate in that he, like Boromir, is second-in-command material and requires someone to direct his energy, but he is, by reason of his position, expected to do this task himself. Mardil his Steward tries to check and re-direct his tendency towards

excessive conventional heroism, but his success is only temporary. Like Boromir, Fëanor and Túrin, Eärnur is not inclined to view others' opinions in perspective, and he throws his life away in a "heroic" encounter with the Lord of the Nazgûl, as Beowulf does in his fight with the dragon, and with somewhat similar consequences for his country. Éomer, during Théoden's lassitude, is preserved from the mistakes of the other conventional heroes because he is of genuine leadership material and can consequently direct his tendencies towards conventional heroism in a useful manner and on his own initiative.

Essential to the restoration and maintenance of order is the recognition by those with a conventionally heroic outlook of the validity of artistic heroism. Fëanor and most of his relatives gain immortality in song but little else by surrendering their physical immortality in conventionally heroic exploits. Eärendil, one of the few to survive and gain another kind of immortality, does so because, instead of trying to fight Morgoth, he follows his inclination to build a ship and go to sea, which pacific course of action enables him to save Middle-earth as well as himself. Théoden, too old to change the values which have governed him all his life, dies in a suitably memorable fashion and becomes the subject of immortal songs. However, Éomer and Éowyn both come to perceive that the standards which they have followed unquestioningly and the goals which they have pursued unhesitatingly cannot be applied to every situation. In the Last Debate, Gandalf explains that the move against Mordor will give the Hobbits their only hope of success, yet warns that the gesture may be unavailing for themselves in that, if Sauron regains the Ring despite the diversion there will be, as Sam puts it, "'no more songs'" (II, p.345). Éomer replies not by musing on the possibility of dying gloriously, but by saying that he

will respond to Aragorn's need for support in return for the latter's help at the Hornburg. This is a more genial aspect of conventional heroism, and it indicates that Éomer now values Aragorn's friendship over the prospect of an immortal name or a magnificent fight, which is important in view of the fact that at their first meeting, he had been only too ready to fight Aragorn and his companions because of the dictates of the conventional heroic code. Moreover, Éomer already shows, before leaving Rohan, that he is developing a broader outlook. He can expect, and gets, the very opposite of praise, thanks and reward for pursuing the Orcs without Théoden's permission, but he does so regardless because he feels that they are a menace which must be destroyed. His sister Éowyn, having sought and failed to achieve a heroic death, does make an immortal name for herself but finds that it is only by electing to adopt values she had previously despised that she can attain happiness.

It is clear that conventional heroism and songs celebrating conventionally heroic exploits and immortalizing the names of conventional heroes are not "wrong" in themselves. Manwë reluctantly endorses Fëanor's boast that the Noldor will live in song if nowhere else; and the cavalry charge of the Rohirrim against Sauron's forces outside Minas Tirith is praised by all. The point is that military prowess should not be the chief value nor a glorious name the main objective: the end must justify the means. Mandos replies to Manwë that Fëanor's rebellion is still wrong regardless of how many songs are made about him. Faramir perceives the necessity of fighting Sauron, but does not enjoy the process as the Rohirrim do, is uninterested in an immortal name, and prefers the values to be expected of a man with a peaceful outlook who values conventional heroism only as a means to restore

peace. (It should be noted that Bilbo, who throughout his journey takes a dim view of conventionally heroic exploits, changes his mind somewhat during the Battle of Five Armies: "The most dreadful of all Bilbo's experiences, and the one which at the time he hated most - which is to say it was the one he was most proud of, and most fond of recalling long afterwards, although he was quite unimportant in it" (H, p.259), although his basic opinion is "'Really it is enough to make one weep, after all one has gone through.... I have heard songs of many battles, and I have always understood that defeat may be glorious. It seems very uncomfortable, not to say distressing. I wish I was well out of it'" (H, pp.261-62). Nonetheless he does reach a greater and more knowledgable appreciation of the value of conventional heroism than he had had at the beginning of the expedition.) Those who are interested in conventional heroism for its own sake, such as Túrin, Fëanor, Boromir and Eärnur, contribute more to the forces of disorder than to the restoration of order.

The heroes who are more firmly committed to the "greater vision of life" beyond themselves are similar to Arthur's (idealized) knights in that they fight and behave heroically so as to prevent or correct injustice and help those weaker than themselves. Often they die while they are still in this role because the state of the world is such that not all their efforts can do more than bring about a temporary, illusory or local state of order. Consequently they are unable to assume their true places, or they achieve their true places but are unable to create a true order because the disorder of the world overwhelms the community. For example, Haldar is killed before he can assume his father's place as the leader of the Second House of the Edain, and his place is taken by his sister until his son is able to assume it at her death. This

situation is also found in the Third Age, as where Helm cannot restore order to Rohan before he dies. Since his two sons are also killed in the war against the Dunlendings, peace must be restored to the kingdom by his nephew Fréalaf. The later Kings of Gondor and the Ruling Stewards are unable to prevent the degeneration of Gondor and the loss of territory to Sauron and other peoples such as the Haradrim. Leaders such as Hador, Húrin, Barahir and the fifteen Chieftains of the Dúnedain before Aragorn II achieve their places as leaders of their Houses but they are leaders in exile and are usually unable to govern peacefully because the disordered state of the world eventually ensures the destruction of what should be their realms. When they are able to hold their realms in an ordered world, they become heroic in the artistic sense in that they are living in their correct roles, which involve fighting only when it is necessary to maintain order. This is the policy which Éomer wishes to follow: "'we desire only to be free, and to live as we have lived, keeping our own, and serving no foreign lord, good or evil'" (II, p.35). Because the state of the outer world is chaotic, the Rohirrim are forced to fight to restore order, and it is only then that they are able to achieve the kind of life that they desire.

Courage, resourcefulness and willingness to take risks are all obvious (conventionally) heroic attributes, but intelligence, self-restraint and discretion (not notably characteristic of conventional heroes who appear in the works of Tolkien or any other author) are also vital complements in the restoration of order. It is not enough to know what one can do, although it is the first pre-requisite. It is also necessary to be able to judge what the situation requires and how much strength, courage, skill or subtlety is necessary, and to act accordingly. This calls for the courage deliberately to "lower"

oneself by being or appearing to be less than one is or can be, because the requirements of the situation and its desirable outcome demand less conventionally heroic behaviour than the character is capable of giving. Thus, the Valar are willing to restrict themselves and be less than it is possible for them to be by limiting their powers to the confines of the world. Melkor, far from willingly agreeing to restrict himself to accommodate the world, tries to increase his power and make the world accommodate itself to him by becoming a part of him. The five Wizards are really Maiar who choose to become subject to death by "accident" or "misadventure" in mortal lands and are bound not to use their full powers. Huan, in order to aid Lúthien, "humbled his pride and suffered her to ride upon him in the fashion of a steed" (S, p.173), a kind of work to which he is unaccustomed. The Rangers also appear to be less than they are and do not try to behave with obvious conventional heroism because such behaviour would be inappropriate to the prevailing circumstances. They, like Gandalf and Faramir in the war-minded society of Minas Tirith, have the moral courage not to demonstrate their heroism ostentatiously merely for the sake of raising themselves in the esteem of others when the situation does not demand such action. Túrin lacks the self-knowledge and self-security to ignore Saeros' insult. Because he does not exercise any self-restraint, the results are unnecessarily disastrous to himself and to others, since his audience is aware of his physical bravery and that Saeros' insult is unwarranted.

The dangers of a lack of self-restraint are outlined in "Ofermod" in which Tolkien equates the excessive heroism which is motivated by a desire for a glorious name with chivalry, in that the would-be hero "does more than he need" ("Ofermod", p.20), adding that such conduct is "Magnificent perhaps, but certainly wrong. Too foolish to be heroic"

(p.22). This attitude is expressed by Kullervo (in Kalevala) in such a way that it is obvious that the desire to appear extraordinary becomes excessive and permeates every aspect of life, even such activities as fishing, and is not restricted to situations of battle and conflict. His naive, implicitly boastful questions are met with scornful encouragement by his father's servants, and his reactions have undesirable results:

> "Shall I pull with all my efforts,
> Row, exerting all my vigour;
> Shall I row with common efforts,
> Row no stronger than is needful?"
> And the steersman made him answer,
> And he spoke the words which follow:
> "Pull away with all your efforts,
> Row, exerting all your vigour,
> Row the boat in twain you cannot,
> Neither break it into fragments."
> Kullervo, Kalervo's offspring,
> Pulled thereat with all his efforts,
> Rowed, exerting all his vigour,
> Rowed in twain the wooden oarlocks,
> Ribs of juniper he shattered,
> And he smashed the boat of aspen.
> .....
> "Shall I thresh with all my efforts,
> Putting forth my manly efforts;
> Shall I thresh with common efforts,
> As the threshing-pole is able?"
> Answered thereupon the net-man,
> "Would you call it proper threshing,
> If with all your strength you threshed not,
> Putting forth your manly efforts?"
> Kullervo, Kalervo's offspring,
> Threshed away with all his efforts,
> Putting forth his manly efforts,
> Into soup he churned the water,
> Into tow he threshed the drag-net,
> Into slime he crushed the fishes.[15]

Tolkien's characters, like Kullervo, discover that when they do more than they need, there is a repercussion effect. Túrin, like Kullervo, is several times guilty of excess because of his lack of

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15. Kalevala, Runo XXXV, 11.17-32, 45-58, trans. W.F. Kirby (London: J.M. Dent & Co., and New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., n.d.). Túrin's story is based on Kullervo's: see Carpenter, p.96.

self-knowledge (and therefore self-security), inability to assess a situation, and concern about the opinions of others, as is indicated in the Saeros incident. In Nargothrond he becomes dissatisfied with the guerrilla tactics of the Elves because they offer no opportunity for obviously heroic deeds which would receive praise and admiration. He is adhering to the theory that is a primary driving force behind the exploits of Beowulf, Cu Chulainn, Roland and Beorhtnoth, among others: the heavier the odds, the greater the likelihood of being killed and the more fighting ability displayed, the more illustrious and immortal the name and the fame (whether awarded by the hero's admiring peers during his lifetime, or posthumously). By persuading the Elves to take his advice and building the bridge to further his policy, Túrin does more than is necessary, and his rejection of Ulmo's advice is not only a rejection of good sense but of the "proper" behaviour as approved by a Vala and of the authority which the latter represents.

Even when the motive behind the excessive heroism is not hubris or a desire for an immortal name, but a selfless concern for someone or something outside oneself or some other "positive" impulse,[16] the immediate result of the excessively heroic action is negative because it is a loss of self-control and a failure to acknowledge the requirements of the situation. The results of being overmastered by some positive emotion can be as disastrous as the consequences of being ruled by pride or selfishness. For example, in Moria Gandalf urges the Company to flee from the Chamber of Mazarbul while he uses magic to confound their pursuers. Aragorn objects that "'We cannot leave you to hold the

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16. Such as the justified grief and anger of Gwindor and Éomer over the (respectively) real and apparent death of a sibling at the hands of an enemy which prompt them to uncontrolled charges; or Frodo's flight through Shelob's cave in an excess of premature joy over their "escape".

door alone!'", but Gandalf replies "'Do as I say!... Swords are no more use here. Go!'" (I, p.340). Aragorn knows quite well that this particular piece of business calls for Gandalf's talents, and that, in any case, having put himself under Gandalf's leadership after his recommended assault on the mountain pass has failed, he is bound to obey. However, his personal anxiety for Gandalf, directly stated in an urgent warning before they reach Moria and obliquely in several remarks during the journey in the dark (I, pp.324-25, 326), is so strong that he cannot resist the temptation to try and help the Wizard when the Balrog makes his unwelcome appearance. Aragorn's selfless concern for Gandalf leads to disaster.

> "Over the bridge!" cried Gandalf, recalling his strength. "Fly! This is a foe beyond any of you. I must hold the narrow way. Fly!" Aragorn and Boromir did not heed the command, but still held their ground, side by side, behind Gandalf at the far end of the bridge. The others halted just within the doorway at the hall's end, and turned, unable to leave their leader to face the enemy alone.
> .....
> "He cannot stand alone!" cried Aragorn suddenly and ran back along the bridge. "Elendil!" he shouted. "I am with you, Gandalf!"
> "Gondor!" cried Boromir and leaped after him.
> At that moment Gandalf lifted his staff, and crying aloud he smote the bridge before him.
> (I, pp.344-45)

The fact that the Balrog's sword had broken rather than Gandalf's indicates that, left to himself, the Wizard could have defeated the enemy. The sudden intervention of Aragorn requires instantaneous and drastic action which proves fatal to both combatants. As he vanishes, Gandalf's last words (totally in character) are "'Fly, you fools!'" (I, p.345), and Aragorn rouses the stupefied Company with the exclamation "'We must obey his last command. Follow me!'" (I, p.345). A prey to his well-intentioned impulse, Aragorn does not follow his own advice before the

Wizard falls. By trying to prevent the disaster which he foresees for Gandalf in Moria, he helps to cause it.

While many of Tolkien's conventional heroes, such as Beren or Aragorn, are brought up in traditions of heroism so that heroic behaviour in pursuit of place and order is inbred, in other cases characters become heroes or behave heroically in the conventional sense due to the pressure of external circumstances, as does Bilbo at the back door of Erebor, Gimli at the door to the Paths of the Dead, and the Ents and Hobbits when threatened by Saruman's forces. Frodo, as noted above, is "made" by Eru to volunteer for the role of Ring-bearer, but he needs help only to overcome his fear, not to make him fit or suitable material for the task, and he responds suitably to the changing circumstances of his situation. In the barrow-wight's mound he is roused to action by the helplessness of his friends, he refuses to return to Rivendell after the assault on the mountain Caradhras has failed, he is forced by Boromir's attack to make a decision at Parth Galen, and in Mordor he is driven by the Orc troops into making the journey at a speed which is essential to the success of his mission and which he would not have been able to manage without the impetus provided by another force (his decision on Amon Hen to take off the Ring is a somewhat different case because the intervention of Gandalf's voice momentarily blocks the power of Sauron's eye and gives Frodo a moment <u>free</u> of external pressure in which to choose to take off the Ring).

Beren, like Frodo, is manoeuvered by Eru into going to a particular place on a mission which he would not have assumed otherwise: "it was put into his heart that he would go down into the Hidden Kingdom" (S, p.164). He must go in order to fulfil his pre-destined role. Beren's unprecedented (though not entirely unexpected since Melian had predicted

his appearance) arrival in Doriath is an essential part of Eru's plans for world history, involving the eventual destruction of Doriath, the continuing fulfilment of the Doom of the Noldor, and the far-reaching effects of the decisions and actions of Beren and Lúthien. When brought before Thingol, Beren is dumb with fear, but he looks at Lúthien and then at Melian, "and it seemed to him that words were put into his mouth. Fear left him, and the pride of the eldest house of Men returned to him" (S, p.166; emphasis added). The deeds necessary to achieve the quest are within his power, but he needs help and intervention from others. Having received help from an external power (Eru, or the Valar acting under Eru's direction) in his decision to go to Doriath and in his reply to Thingol (whether from Lúthien, Melian or Eru in the second instance is unclear), he also accepts help from Finrod, Huan, Thorondor and Lúthien herself because he knows that he needs it if he is to respond successfully to the situation in which he finds himself.

During the actual taking of the Silmaril Eru once more intervenes, and imposes upon Beren the thought of taking more than one Silmaril: "It came then into Beren's mind that he would go beyond his vow, and bear out of Angband all three of the Jewels of Fëanor; but such was not the doom of the Silmarils" (S, p.181). Eru (either through the Music or in one of the gestures not sung into the Music and which he did not reveal to the Ainur) has decided in advance, for the purposes of furthering events along the course he has chosen for them, that Beren will keep his vow and take one Silmaril. However, again for his own purposes, Eru has also decided that Beren will not be allowed to benefit from the impulse of excessive heroism which Eru has placed in his mind.

The immediate result of Beren's attempt is disastrous: "The knife Angrist snapped, and a shard of the blade flying smote the cheek of

Morgoth. He groaned and stirred, and all the host of Angband moved in sleep" (S, p.181). Carcharoth has roused from the sleep put on him by Lúthien when she and Beren reach the gate, and the unavoidable inference is that Morgoth's uneasiness has wakened him. Thus, the catastrophes which befall the lovers and Doriath through the agency of Carcharoth are attributable to the interference of the external power which causes Beren to go into Doriath and directs him to try to retrieve all three jewels.

It is necessary that Doriath be destroyed because Thingol, through possessiveness and egotism, disrupts his realm by involving it and himself in the Doom of the Noldor by demanding a Silmaril. In the long term, however, the results are positive. The jewel is "returned" to Middle-earth by Eärendil as a star of hope for those afflicted by Morgoth and, later, Sauron. Beren and Lúthien are key figures in the development of history, serve (by becoming the subject of immortal songs) as inspiration to those who come after, and begin a heroic dynasty which, it is said, will never fail. The fact that they pay an extremely high price for being selected as Eru's instruments to accomplish great deeds which fulfil his purposes is part of the "payment" system of the marred world: "the wages of heroism [that is, heroism in the conventional sense] is death" (MC, p.31). Moreover, the fact that pain and unhappiness are often visited on the virtuous is in keeping with Judeo-Christian religious tradition. "The sufferings of Israel and of the Chosen Servant of Jahweh were the necessary means by which God's power and righteousness were to be manifested to humanity."[17] On the other hand, one of the facts which makes conventionally heroic behaviour and the occasions which

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17. Christopher Dawson, Progress and Religion: An Historical Enquiry (London: Sheed and Ward, 1945), p.153.

prompt it valuable is that artistic heroism - daily life - and the benefits or order are more appreciated in contrast, just as (according to Tolkien) goodness is highlighted and emphasized by the presence of evil. During the composition of The Lord of the Rings Tolkien wrote to his son Christopher, apparently with approval, of Charles Williams' analysis of the book: "'Ch. Williams who is reading it all... says the great thing is that its centre is not in strife and war and heroism (though they are all understood and depicted) but in freedom, peace, ordinary life and good living. Yet he agrees that these very things require the existence of a great world outside the Shire - lest they should grow stale by custom and turn into the humdrum.'"[18] Those who do not participate in conventionally heroic events themselves are offered the reminders to be found in song and story (as Frodo tells Sam just before he leaves Middle-earth, III, p.309), while the same kind of inspiration serves those who must be conventionally heroic themselves: "Maedhros son of Fëanor lifted up his heart, perceiving that Morgoth was not unassailable; for the deeds of Beren and Lúthien were sung in many songs throughout Beleriand" (S, p.188).

The heroic (in either sense of the word) characters admit the authority of Eru (and of his deputies the Ainur) rather than defy it. This attitude does not make them puppets. Their acceptance of the challenges which confront them are within the scope of their individual personalities. By acknowledging their fate and meeting it without complaint the characters maintain their integrity to themselves and others. Because they acknowledge the will of the world's Powers and fight or endure what they must, they remain true to themselves. "His

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18. Quoted in Inklings, p.123.

/the hero's/ courage and will... represent his triumphant assertion of himself as man, his insistence on human importance despite human weakness."[19] Because Tuor has the self-security and moral courage to accept Ulmo's will and, in effect, agree to be the latter's instrument, he is placed in a position where he can, thanks to elvish influence, fulfil all his potential and develop himself to an extent impossible outside Gondolin. In contrast, Turgon, like Túrin before him, refuses Ulmo's advice because he is too proud in his role as King. He lacks the moral courage to be "diminished" by doing what he is told by someone else. Similarly, Fëanor, Denethor and the Númenoreans, with their inner directed vision and concentration on self, cannot endure to accept the will of Eru as expressed in the advice of various Ainur, since it would involve personal loss and defeat in some issue important to them. Frodo, offered an opportunity by Elrond to retreat from his Eru-prompted commitment at the Council, repeats his resolution to go, holding by his given word. After he loses his hand, Beren is placed in a position where he can repudiate his word, keep Lúthien, and escape any further negative results of the quest. It is in keeping with his personal integrity and a measure of his heroism (in both definitions) that he decides to keep the vow he had made to Thingol and return to accept whatever consequences may follow. They are heroic because their heroism is in accordance with the designs of Eru: "It is the heroism of obedience and love not of pride and wilfulness that is the most heroic and most moving" ("Ofermod", p.22). As Williams puts it, "this was fated, and this must be willed. It was the everlasting reconciliation of the everlasting contradiction - to will what was fated, to choose necessity."[20]

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19. Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Ethical Pattern in "The Lord of the Rings", Critique, 3 (Spring-Fall 1959), p.33.

20. Charles Williams, Shadows of Ecstasy (London: Victor Gollancz, 1933), p.202.

In the tradition of fairy-stories, the results are positive when the will of God is acknowledged and accepted: "The wonderful happens, the lover is recognized, the spell of misfortune is broken, when the situation that already exists is utterly accepted, when additional tasks or disappointments are boldly faced, when poverty is seen to be of no consequence, when unfairness is borne without indignation, when the loathsome is loved."[21] Because they accept their pre-destined fates, Tuor meets and marries Idril, founds a heroic dynasty and achieves immortality; Frodo ensures that Sauron is destroyed and order restored; Beren is recognized by Thingol, allowed to marry Lúthien, and acknowledged by Doriath's law and people.

Gandalf tells Bilbo "only a small part is played in great deeds by any hero'" (I, p.283), meaning that all deeds are prepared for and are the consequences of other deeds performed by other people, and are performed in the context of a particular local and general world situation which is made up of innumerable factors and components. While acts of conventional heroism are necessary on occasion to preserve the possibility of artistic heroism in everyday life, the two modes of behaviour are complementary in that they are mutual reinforcements. Those who perform no deeds of conventional heroism and yet become aware of such deeds can perceive the value of their peaceful existences in the light of an offered threat and the preserving intervention (as occurs, for example, in Bree and the Shire after the War of the Ring), while those who are called upon to be conventional heroes appreciate the value of the ordered society which they are trying to save or restore (as voiced by Frodo to Gandalf, I, pp.71-72). Each is necessary to the other.

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21. The Classic Fairy Tales, ed. Iona and Peter Opie (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p.12.

Chapter IV - The Relationship between Order and "Otherness"

In Tolkien's works order is fundamentally concerned with a recognition and valuing of "otherness", including an acknowledgement of mutual dependence and externally-directed responsibilities. This attitude is evident even in Tolkien's narrative poems and short stories. In "The Lay of Aotrou & Itroun" Aotrou is not satisfied with the loving companionship of his wife Itroun, and feels he must have children as well. He secretly visits a witch who dwells alone in the wilderness, and with her help practises a deception upon his wife which causes her to bear twins. However, the price the witch demands is that he forsake Itroun and become her lover. Aotrou's refusal leads to his death and consequent separation from his wife, who dies of grief shortly thereafter. It is emphasized that Aotrou should have gratefully accepted the heaven-sent happiness of his union with Itroun, rather than trying to add children as well to the family circle through an unholy agency. He only fully appreciates Itroun as herself when the witch states her price. "Imram" is a description of Saint Brendan's voyage, as related to a young monk who is devoted to him. The saint's story deals with a company, and is told almost exclusively in terms of the group (that is, he uses "we", "us" and "our", rather than "I", "me" and "my"). In "Farmer Giles of Ham" (whose communal affiliation is indicated in the title) the titular "hero" requires the aid of his horse, the parson, the blacksmith, the miller, and everyone who helps to stitch the rings to his clothing in order to make his "armour" when he is finally persuaded to "do his duty" and protect Ham from the dragon. In "Smith of Wootton Major", Smith treasures his visits to Faery largely because he can thus satisfy his "desire to converse with other living

things" (OFS, p.58) who are not human, and witness events which he cannot in his own world. Although he is, on his journeys to Faery, usually alone, he is depicted as being with others, often part of a group, during the most important moments of his life: at the Feast of Good Children, when he first conceives the wish to see the Faery Queen, is given the magic star, and offers a compassionate gift to the girl who becomes his wife; at his two meetings with the Faery Queen; at his meeting with the King when he decides to give up the star. Moreover, always in the background is an awareness of his roles of husband, father, grandfather, and respected and valued member of the community Wootton Major. In "Leaf by Niggle" Niggle, after resenting the necessity of fulfilling his obligations to others, especially Parish, finds that Parish had been making an unexpected contribution to Niggle's seemingly solitary activity of painting: "Some of the most beautiful - and the most characteristic, the most perfect examples of the Niggle style - were seen to have been produced in collaboration with Mr. Parish: there was no other way of putting it" (LN, p.86). He admits: "'What I need is Parish. There are lots of things about earth, plants, and trees that he knows and I don't. This place cannot be left just as my private park. I need help and advice: I ought to have got it sooner'" (LN, p.87). The "picture" cannot be properly completed without the help of another. At the same time, it is Niggle who helps Parish to leave the workhouse earlier than the latter had anticipated, and who gives him a wider and enriched perspective of things outside himself. Even the contribution of Mrs. Parish is recognized, as Parish tells Niggle: "'The house is finished now, as well as we could make it; but I should like to show it to her. She'll be able to make it better, I expect: more homely'" (LN, p.89).

In the longer works, Frodo's dependence on others is an illustration of inter-dependence in that the safety of the world's "good" inhabitants and the survival of the world's leaders rests on the success of his mission, while the outcome of his quest depends on the assistance of others. The military leaders require Frodo's endurance to preserve them, while Frodo needs the distractions afforded by the war if his endurance is to have a positive result. Moreover, Frodo must accept the help of Sam, who believes, however inarticulately, in order, and Gollum, the agent of disorder, both of whom are devoted to Frodo personally (and selfishly) beyond any adherence to an abstract or larger idea of how things should be. Roger Sale notes: "Frodo's virtue lies in his good manners, and his good manners are his recognition of the blessed and cursed otherness of his servant and his wretched guide."[1] Frodo's acceptance of both his flawed companions as themselves is a small representation within the framework of the larger one of the necessity for individuals to work, as individuals, within a unit to achieve a common end. Because the negative aspects of each character also contribute to the resolution of the order-disorder conflict, the situation also illustrates the harnessing of "evil" to work towards a "good" end.

The necessity of acknowledging "otherness" and inter-dependence is also demonstrably present in the stories of the three fairy-tale, conventional heroes, Beren, Tuor, and Aragorn. Giles, Niggle and Frodo are "ordinary" or "common" people who become "heroic" (Giles and Frodo in the conventional sense as well as artistically). Deborah C. Rogers describes the Hobbits collectively as "Everyclod", and dubs Aragorn

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1. Roger Sale, "Tolkien and Frodo Baggins", in Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), p.285.

"Everyhero",[2] a useful classification which can also be applied to Beren and Tuor.

The general pattern which is discernible in the lives of the three "Everyhero" figures can be regarded as the "bones" on which their stories are built. Tolkien objected to the reductionist attitude which declared that "any two stories that are built round the same folk-lore motive, or are made up of a generally similar combination of such motives, are 'the same stories'. We read that Beowulf 'is only a version of Dat Erdmänneken'; that 'The Black Bull of Norroway is Beauty and the Beast', or 'is the same story as Eros and Psyche'; that the Norse Mastermaid ... is 'the same story as the Greek tale of Jason and Medea'" (OFS, p.22). While acknowledging the presence of a general pattern, he goes on to state: "It is precisely the colouring, the atmosphere, the unclassifiable individual details of a story, and above all the general purport that informs with life the undissected bones of the plot, that really count" (OFS, pp.22-23).

The individual careers of Beren, Tuor and Aragorn show a recurring pattern, and the results of their actions produce parallel effects. The (related) families of Beren and Tuor are involved and nearly destroyed in the fight against Morgoth: Barahir fights in the Fourth Battle and saves Finrod, after which most of the First House of the Edain are led south by Barahir's wife; Huor, with Húrin, fights in both the Fourth and Fifth Battles, and during the latter they successfully cover Turgon's retreat but the result is disastrous for themselves, their families and followers. Tuor, like Beren, becomes an outlaw and lives in the wild, and both marry

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2. Deborah C. Rogers, "Everyclod and Everyhero: The Image of Man in Tolkien", in A Tolkien Compass, ed. Jared C. Lobdell (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing Co., 1975), pp.69-76.

elven princesses after proving themselves worthy. They are rescued or helped by Elves (Beren by Finrod and Lúthien; Tuor by Voronwë, Idril and Glorfindel), and betrayed by elven rivals in love (Beren by Daeron and Celegorm, Tuor by Maeglin). They contribute indirectly and unwittingly to the falls of Doriath and Gondolin, and preserve the lives of Elves: Beren saves Thingol from Carcharoth, and Tuor leads the survivors of Gondolin from the city. Aragorn, descended from Beren and Tuor, loses his father in a fight with Orcs against whom Arathorn is battling with the sons of Elrond, who raises him as the Grey-elven leader Annael raises Tuor. He lives in the wild and becomes an "outlaw". He marries Elrond's daughter, and is befriended by the Elves of Rivendell, Lothlórien and Mirkwood. Through his role in the War of the Ring he contributes to the desertion of the elven communities: the Elves must leave Middle-earth because they do not belong in the world which he will rule. At the same time he helps to preserve them from the results of a victory by Sauron.

This general pattern points to several concerns which are fundamental parts of order as it functions in Arda. All three Men can develop their abilities beyond what other mortals can achieve and so complete their particular quests because of elvish influence and assistance, indicating inter-dependence and the value of "otherness". They are also catalysts to Faërie society and beings, jolting them out of the traditional stasis which has developed in the closed and long-lived communities of Doriath, Gondolin and Rivendell. The elvish societies are also enriched, but experience the loss which inevitably accompanies mortal beings. However, this process is both natural and correct in that while stasis is right and acceptable in a society of Faërie beings in Faërie, the Elves who are so affected by mortals live in the mortal world of Middle-earth and

so are subject to its influence: it would be an expression of perversion and disorder if the conditions of "unfallen" Faërie persisted as dominant in the "fallen" world. The successful fulfilment of the three Men's quests points to the shift of focus from Elves and an "other" world to humans and this world,[3] which reaches its culmination in the Fourth Age, when only humans are accepted as existing in Middle-earth. The process is inevitable with the disruption of the Music, and is part of Eru's plan and an expression of his will.

A more detailed examination of the stories of Beren, Tuor and Aragorn reveals more clearly Tolkien's concern with the various different parts which are vital components in the conception of order which is so essential to his works. The marriage of "Everyhero" is traditionally seen as the signal that his quest is achieved, and as undeniable evidence that order in his society has been restored or established. The princess is the goal of his personal quest: "Whatever in the world has lured, whatever has seemed to promise joy, has been premonitory of her existence ..... she is their incarnation of the promise of perfection...."[4] In his role of social representative striving to achieve order, "if his stature is that of world monarch she is the world, and if he is a warrior

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3. Túrin's life and career has many points of similarity with those of the other three. He is affected by the participation of his father Húrin in the wars against Morgoth, raised by a king of the Elves, becomes an outlaw, is loved by King Orodreth's daughter Finduilas, is aided by Beleg and Gwindor, apparently betrayed by Gwindor and Brandir, contributes directly to the destruction of Nargothrond, and rather belatedly tries to help Gwindor and Finduilas after the elvish stronghold is destroyed in the battle. He fails while the other three succeed because of his narrow-mindedness, unwillingness to accept others on their own terms, and inability to derive the benefit of seeing cause and effect in his own and others' experiences.

4. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, 2nd ed., Bollingen Series XVII (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p.111.

she is fame. She is the image of his destiny which he is to release from the prison of enveloping circumstance."[5] To the hero, in both the personal and cosmic sense, "woman, in the picture language of mythology, represents the totality of what can be known. The hero is the one who comes to know."[6] The hero's marriage represents the achievement of his knowledge of himself and of the world which he will rule, as indicated in the myth of Niall and "Royal Rule" of Ireland,[7] or of Arthur and Gloriana in The Faerie Queene. However, while the marriages of the "Everyhero" figures in Tolkien's works are essential to their development as individuals and as indications of social order, the events surrounding the winning of the princess in each case illustrate the importance of inter-dependence, the necessity of accepting "otherness", and the inevitability of the changes in Middle-earth which are part of Eru's plan. An examination of "the hero's marriage" pattern as it is used by Tolkien in the stories of several of his characters shows the relationships of certain unique "parts" to each other and to the "whole."

Since the marriage of the rising hero indicates the beginning of the new authority structure which he will dominate, and the passing of the old structure which is ruled by the hero of the former generation, the representative of the old order resists the younger hero, although ultimately and inevitably his efforts are futile. When the representative of the old order is the father of the hero's prospective bride, he tries to deny his daughter to the person who will replace him. "The hegemony wrested from the enemy, the freedom won from the malice of the

5. Campbell, p.342.

6. Campbell, p.116.

7. Referred to by Campbell, pp.116-18.

monster, the life energy released from the toils of the tyrant Holdfast - is symbolized as a woman. She is the maiden of the innumerable dragon slayings, the bride abducted from the jealous father, the virgin rescued from the unholy lover. She is the 'other portion' of the hero himself ...."[8] If the old hero were successful in his efforts, he would prevent the breakdown of the old order by ensuring that his daughter stays in her place within it as his daughter, and thus frustrate the hero's struggle to "complete" himself by marrying her and making her his wife within the new structure. This is the universal pattern of myth and fairy-story. "The motif of the difficult task as prerequisite to the bridal bed has spun the hero-deeds of all time and all the world. In stories of this pattern the parent is in the role of Holdfast; the hero's artful solution of the task amounts to a slaying of the dragon. The tests imposed are difficult beyond measure. They seem to represent an absolute refusal, on the part of the parent ogre, to permit life to go its way; nevertheless, when a fit candidate appears, no task in the world is beyond his skill. Unpredicted helpers, miracles of time and space, further his project, destiny itself (the maiden) lends a hand and betrays a weak spot in the parental system."[9]

Thingol behaves as the usual unreasonable and tyrannical father does when confronted with his daughter's suitor in myth and fairy-story, but an analysis of his motives reveals certain definite reasons why he, as an individual, behaves as he does. Beren is not only the representative of the new order, but a member of the alien race which will replace Thingol's own. As one who is under no inherent obligation to respect Thingol's authority, who disturbs the status quo of the complacent family circle and threatens to disrupt it forever, who aspires

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8. Campbell, p.342.

9. Campbell, p.344.

to a marriage which would make him heir to Doriath, Beren is inevitably a source of exasperation and fear to the King. Moreover, Thingol loves Lúthien possessively, that is, as an extension of himself, and sees her attachment to Beren as an attempt by the latter to "steal" her, rather than as her natural and inevitable growth away from himself to someone else. These factors, plus Thingol's overweening racial and familial pride and unjustified contempt for Beren's race and family, all indicate his refusal to recognize several of the fundamental components which contribute to a state of personal and social order. Thingol's assignment of an errand which he hopes will prove fatal does - not only to Beren, but to Thingol himself and the old order of Doriath over which he presides. "The tyrant is proud, and therein resides his doom. He is proud because he thinks of his strength as his own; thus he is in the clown role, as a mistaker of shadow for substance; it is his destiny to be tricked. The mythological hero, reappearing from the darkness that is the source of the shapes of day, brings a knowledge of the secret of the tyrant's doom."[10] By refusing to acknowledge the necessity and value of interaction with "other" beings and trying to deny them their rights as "other" (that is, separate from himself), and by turning a blind eye to the inevitability of change and loss which are undeniable facts of life in Middle-earth, Thingol tries to defeat the forces which Beren represents and which cannot be defeated because they are "built into" the fallen world's structure by the disrupted Music. His efforts to preserve the past in a changeless, static condition are futile: "The hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because he <u>is</u>.... He does not mistake apparent changelessness in time for the

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10. Campbell, p.337.

permanence of Being, nor is he fearful of the next moment (or of the "other thing"), as destroying the permanent with its change."[11]

Lúthien, forced to choose between Thingol and Beren, unhesitatingly decides in the latter's favour, accepting the necessity of change and forward movement. After her first escape attempt Thingol tries to ensure that she remains in her place in the order which he rules by literally imprisoning her. She finally frees herself from the childhood in which her tyrannical father tries to keep her, and it is largely with her aid that Beren is eventually able to complete his quest and carry out his predestined role. Thingol is finally forced to accept the relationship between the two and permit the alien to enter his family circle. However, because he initially refuses to recognize the rights to which those around him are entitled as separate beings, and does not allow the peaceful transition from the old to the new, he sets in motion the forces which will destroy the order of Doriath.

In many ways, the two cases of Beren and Lúthien and Tuor and Idril are directly opposite. In contrast to the trials experienced by the former pair, the latter encounters no parental objections to their marriage: Turgon is quite willing to welcome Tuor as his son-in-law, and even works (unknowingly) to assist him by providing a native guide to Gondolin when Tuor is sent by Ulmo to deliver a warning (Beren, on the other hand, has to penetrate Doriath's defences through his own abilities, and is consequently regarded as a suspicious trespasser by the King). There are several reasons for the different attitudes of Thingol and Turgon to their respective sons-in-law. Beren has only his own worth (unperceived by Thingol although obvious to everyone else) and the

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11. Campbell, p.243.

reported deeds of his family (who are unknown to Thingol) to stand upon, while Tuor has the advantages of Turgon's previous acquaintance with his father and uncle, their self-sacrificial last stand during the Fifth Battle, the King's memory of Huor's prophecy, and Ulmo's endorsement. Turgon's pride has increased, but it does not take the form of a feeling of racial or social superiority. Having more knowledge of the Edain than Thingol, Turgon does not make the mistake of undervaluing them. Moreover, while he loves Idril, he recognizes that she cannot reasonably be expected to devote herself to her father forever. Turgon, having lost his wife, appreciates marital happiness more than Thingol, who, prior to Beren's arrival, had never known a threat within his family circle. Tuor can approach Idril from within the family group, while Beren is perforce an "outsider". Idril, like Lúthien, is loved by another "insider", but Maeglin's position is such that he cannot offer any obstacles to the marriage. By proving himself within Gondolin, Tuor does not cause the tensions and upheavals which erupt when Beren leaves Doriath.

However, while Turgon does acknowledge "otherness" and interdependence as related to Tuor, his vision is limited to those immediately around him. His outlook becomes so parochial that he forgets that all beings are, in the final analysis, dependent upon Eru. Therefore, he also forgets that everyone and everything in Middle-earth is subject to mutability. When Ulmo sends him a warning through Tuor, he ignores it and refuses to break up the order over which he presides by leaving Gondolin and removing to the sea:

> But Turgon was become proud, and Gondolin as beautiful as a memory of Elven Tirion, and he trusted still in its secret and impregnable strength, though even a Vala should gainsay it; and after the Nirnaeth Arnoediad [the Fifth Battle] the people of that city desired never

> again to mingle in the woes of Elves and Men without, **nor to return through dread and danger into the West.** Shut behind their pathless and enchanted hills they **suffered none to enter, though he fled from Morgoth** hate-pursued; and tidings of the lands beyond came to **them faint and far, and they heeded them little.**
>
> (S, p.240)

Refusing to recognize the inevitability of change in Middle-earth which he implicitly accepted when he determined to leave Aman, Turgon fails in his duty to the other foes of Morgoth (including Húrin, Tuor's uncle, whose defence had contributed to Turgon's own escape from the rout of the Fifth Battle) to whom he ought to be an ally, and also fails in his duty to his subjects to consider their welfare above his own (or their) wishes. Like Thingol, he mistakes the apparently changeless elvish environment of his realm for the permanent reality despite the changes within himself (he had originally left Aman determined to pursue Morgoth relentlessly, being, with his brother Fingon, "bold and fiery of heart, and loath to abandon any task to which they had put their hands until the bitter end, if bitter it must be" (S, p.89)). He ignores Ulmo's warning to rely on the permanent reality beyond Middle-earth: "'Love not too well the work of thy hands and the devices of thy heart; and remember that the true hope of the Noldor lieth in the West, and cometh from the Sea'" (S, p.240). Turgon chooses to cling to something which he regards as a part of himself (Gondolin, his creation) and believe in its invincibility and the infallibility of the order over which he presides. Because he does not believe that Tuor is a threat to that order, he has no objection to his marriage with Idril, behaving as if they all lived in Aman, where death and resulting transfers of power among the Elves were unknown before Finwë's death. Turgon's blindness and egotism are of a different type than Thingol's, but because of them he also becomes a tyrant attempting to hold onto the past rather than allow history to

develop: "No longer referring the boons of his reign to their transcendent source, the emperor breaks the stereoptic vision which it is his role to sustain. He is no longer the mediator between the two worlds. Man's perspective flattens to include only the human term of the equation, and the experience of a supernal power immediately fails. The upholding idea of the community is lost. Force is all that binds it. The emperor becomes the tyrant ogre (Herod-Nimrod) the usurper from whom the world is now to be saved."[12]

Maeglin places himself in the role of the hero who will vanquish the tyrant, bring about the destruction of the old order and the beginning of the new, and tries to manipulate events to his own advantage by imposing his vision of what the situation should be. Maeglin demonstrates his unfitness for the role he tries to assume: "the torment wherewith he was threatened cowed his spirit, and he purchased his life and freedom by revealing to Morgoth the very place of Gondolin and the ways whereby it might be found and assailed. Great indeed was the joy of Morgoth, and to Maeglin he promised the lordship of Gondolin as his vassal, and the possession of Idril Celebrindal, when the city should be taken; and indeed desire for Idril and hatred for Tuor led Maeglin the easier to his treachery, most infamous in all the histories of the Elder Days" (S, p.242).[13]

To take the place of the true hero requires the deaths of Tuor the true hero and Turgon the representative of the old order so that Maeglin, the "unholy lover", can marry the Princess and become King. Tuor asserts

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12. Campbell, p.349.

13. The assertion that "Maeglin was no weakling or craven" (S, p.242) is rather unconvincing in view of the fact that he is only threatened before he gives the much-desired information: Morgoth, generous in his delight, promises him Idril and lordship after he speaks. Whether Morgoth would have kept his word had Tuor been killed instead of Maeglin is a debatable point.

his right to his place as the true hero by killing Maeglin and escaping with Idril, Eärendil and some other survivors from the wreck of the old order. After a proper ceremony of mourning they establish a settlement by the sea (the location recommended by Ulmo to Turgon as the site for a new order) and join forces with Elwing, Eärendil's future wife and also a representative of a new order who has escaped the final destruction of the old order of Doriath presided over by her father and grandfather. When Tuor feels "old age creep upon him" (S, p.244), he does not wait to become the tyrant of the old order who must be slain by the rising hero of the next generation: "The mystical marriage with the queen goddess of the world represents the hero's total mastery of life; for the woman is life, the hero its knower and master.... With that /his marriage/ he knows that he and the father are one: he is in the father's place."[14] Rather, Tuor and Idril relinquish their places in Middle-earth and "set sail into the sunset and the West, and came no more into any song" (S, p.245). Their deeds accomplished, Tuor and Idril no longer belong to Middle-earth and move from present life to past history, or myth. Their fates, like other aspects of their story, are opposite to those of Beren and Lúthien. Lúthien chooses Beren over Thingol and death over immortality. "But in after days it was sung that Tuor alone of mortal Men was numbered among the elder race, and was joined with the Noldor whom he loved; and his fate is sundered from the fate of Men" (S, p.245).

The third mixed marriage[15] is organized and presented by Tolkien in order to demonstrate a number of similarities to both, although the Beren-Lúthien parallels are much more obvious in The Lord of the Rings

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14. Campbell, pp.120-21.

15. See Paul H. Kocher, Master of Middle-Earth: The Fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972), pp.137-38 for a good discussion of the Aragorn-Arwen relationship.

than the Tuor-Idril influences. Aragorn sings and explains a tale of the meeting between Beren and Lúthien to the Hobbits, connecting himself with the pair early in the reader's acquaintance with him. Arwen is said to resemble Lúthien, calls her decision "'the choice of Lúthien'" (III, p.312), and her first meeting with Aragorn begins with a discussion of their common ancestors. Also, Beren and Lúthien are mentioned several times in the text (both in connection with Aragorn and in other respects), while the names of Tuor and Idril occur only once in the appendices. Like Beren, Aragorn, having set his heart upon "'a treasure no less dear than the treasure of Thingol that Beren once desired'" (III, p.340), has to prove himself by performing a difficult and dangerous task. Like Tuor, he has an advantage in that Elrond knows his family, comes to know and love Aragorn himself (who has a claim on Elrond as the head of the family if for no other reason), and does not regard Arwen as a child incapable of making her own choices and accepting the consequences. And like both Beren and Tuor, Aragorn is the subject of a prophecy (made by Elrond himself) concerning his future greatness.[16]

The Aragorn-Arwen story has enough individual details to make it "a unique embodiment of the pattern" (OFS, p.51). However, the effect of the past (or "myth") on the present (or "history") is an important factor in the story's development: "History often resembles 'Myth', because they are both ultimately of the same stuff" (OFS, p.31), and Tolkien goes on to discuss this statement with regard to lovers who encounter difficulties concerning the reigning authority and the current order: "If indeed Ingeld and Freawaru never lived, or at least never

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16. The prophecies concerning Beren are made by Melian (S, pp.144,167, 168); those concerning Tuor (and Eärendil) by Ulmo (p.126) and by Tuor's father Huor (p.194).

loved, then it is ultimately from nameless man and woman that they get their tale, or rather into whose tale they have entered. They have been put into the Cauldron /of Story/, where so many potent things lie simmering agelong on the fire, among them Love-at-first-sight.... If no young man had ever fallen in love by chance meeting with a maiden, and found old enmities to stand between him and his love, then the god Frey would never have seen Gerdr the giant's daughter from the high-seat of Odin" (OFS, p.31).[17] Aragorn, Arwen and Elrond are all uneasily aware of historical parallels (what might be described as past examples of Ingeld-Freawaru or Frey-Gerdr cases), and consequently Elrond does not make the mistakes of Thingol or Turgon. He accepts Arwen's decision as Thingol had not accepted Lúthien's, and his imposition of a condition - that Aragorn become King of both Arnor and Gondor - is not a demand for something which does not belong to him (as is Thingol's request for a Silmaril). Rather, it is a means by which to spur Aragorn into trying to regain what is rightfully his and assume his proper place (as well as a fatherly effort to ensure that Arwen has the position to which she is entitled if she intends to forsake her place in Aman). Elrond seems to display some racial and familial prejudice (with less excuse than Thingol): "'as for Arwen the Fair, Lady of Imladris and of Lórien, Evenstar of her people, she is of lineage greater than yours, and she has lived in the world already so long that to her you are but as a yearling shoot beside a young birch of many summers. She is too far above you'" (III, p.340; his opinion is echoed in a more general way by Aragorn's mother, III, p.339). However, this statement can also be interpreted

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17. Cf. Tolkien's own identification of himself and his wife with Beren and Lúthien, although Tolkien's policy of waiting to receive the authority figure's permission recalls rather the conduct of Aragorn and Tuor. See Humphrey Carpenter, J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1977), pp.97-98, 38-44, 61-62, and 78-79.

as an effort to warn the prospective suitor and intimidate him from trying to pursue the issue, which is perhaps the intention of reciting Arwen's titles. Elrond is quite aware of the inter-dependence of the world's inhabitants (a point which he stresses at the Council), and knows of the inevitable changes which will befall Elves and Men in Middle-earth (see, for example, III, pp.340, 342), but he naturally wishes to keep his daughter with him if possible. However, he does not allow himself to hope too strongly that Arwen will choose differently from Lúthien: "When Elrond learned the choice of his daughter, he was silent, though his heart was grieved and found the doom long feared none the easier to endure" (III, p.342).

As Chieftain of the Dúnedain and possible future King over most of Middle-earth, it is incumbent upon Aragorn to respect order and authority, and therefore he accepts Elrond's condition: "those who will defend authority against rebellion must not themselves rebel" (S, p.66). Presumably he also respects the "law of Men" (S, p.183) which takes account of the father's wishes, and there is also the fact that he cannot offer Arwen a suitable home or the rank to which she is entitled while he remains a Ranger. His wedding signals, as in tradition, the inexorable advance of the new order and the retirement of the representatives of the old from the world in which they do not now have any places.

The order of the Fourth Age for the first one hundred and twenty years is ruled by King Elessar and Queen Arwen. At the end of that period Aragorn recognizes that his part is finished, and that it is time for their son to become the leader of the world. Aragorn, like Tuor, does not wait to be displaced by the rising generation:

> at last he felt the approach of old age and knew that the span of his life days was drawing to an end, long though it had been. Then Aragorn said to Arwen:
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> "At last, Lady Evenstar, fairest in this world, and most beloved, my world is fading. Lo! we have gathered, and we have spent, and now the time of payment draws near."
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> Arwen knew well what he intended, and long had foreseen it; nonetheless she was overborne by her grief. "Would you then, lord, before your time leave your people that live by your word?" she said.
>
> "Not before my time," he answered. "For if I will not go now, then I must soon go perforce. And Eldarion our son is a man full-ripe for kingship."
>
> .....
>
> "Take counsel with yourself, beloved, and ask whether you would indeed have me wait until I wither and fall from my high seat unmanned and witless. Nay, lady, I am the last of the Númenoreans and the latest King of the Elder Days; and to me has been given not only a span thrice that of Men of Middle-earth, but also the grace to go at my will, and give back the gift. Now, therefore, I will sleep."
>
> .....
>
> "... There is now no ship that would bear me hence, and I must indeed abide the Doom of Men, whether I will or I nill: the loss and the silence. But I say to you, King of the Númenoreans, not till now have I understood the tale of your people and their fall. As wicked fools I scorned them, but I pity them at last. For if this is indeed, as the Eldar say, the gift of the One to Men, it is bitter to receive."
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> (III, pp.343-44)

After Aragorn's death Arwen leaves Minas Tirith and goes to Lórien, which is now deserted and was, even during the War of the Ring, perceived as "a world that was no more" (I, p.364). Her mortal life comes full circle when she dies upon Cerin Amroth, where she became engaged to Aragorn and decided to accept the Doom of Men. Arwen, like Lúthien and Beren, Idril and Tuor (and Elwing and Eärendil, who no longer have a place in Middle-earth when they arrive in the Undying Lands), has fulfilled her role in history and steps out of present history into the history of "the days of old" (III, p.344).

In these three cases can be seen the destruction of the old order and the past so that the new order of the future can arise and history

can continue. "For the mythological hero is the champion not of things become but of things becoming; the dragon to be slain by him is precisely the monster of the status quo; Holdfast, the keeper of the past. From obscurity the hero emerges, but the enemy is great and conspicuous in the seat of power; he is enemy, dragon, tyrant, because he turns to his own advantage the authority of his position. He is Holdfast not because he keeps the past but because he keeps."[18] Thingol is Holdfast because he tries to keep Lúthien under his authority instead of allowing her to satisfy the requirements of her own natural development by allowing her to fulfil her role in history. Turgon is Holdfast in that he holds the order which he has established in Gondolin against the force of historical changes and against the nature of the world to which he has, by his flight from Aman, committed himself (the comparison of Gondolin to the elven city Tirion in Aman is significant in more than one sense). Gondolin is the last great stronghold of the rebellious Noldor and it must be destroyed so that the curse of Mandos can work to its conclusion and the Doom of the Noldor be achieved. Elrond, who holds the greatest of the Three Rings which are partly devoted to preserving things unchanged by mortality or evil, is swept away with the rest of the Elves in the victory over Sauron: "The Third Age was over, and the Days of the Rings were passed, and an end was come of the story and song of those times" (III, p.309). The Elves now belong to past history. The Evenstar of the Elves remains in Middle-earth as a human so that "'the kingship of Men may be restored'" (III, p.342) and the new order established. With the benefit of past historical examples, Elrond is the only one of the three fathers to recognize and accept the necessity of mutual dependence and the inevitability of his personal loss and the loss of the Elves as a

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18. Campbell, p.337.

group: "Only birth can conquer death - the birth, not of the old thing again, but of something new. Within the soul, within the body social, there must be - if we are to experience long survival - a continuous 'recurrence of birth' (palingenesia) to nullify the unremitting recurrences of death."[19] In contrast, Thingol and Turgon mistake the appearance of permanence for the reality.[20]

Although Middle-earth is subject to change and will eventually be abolished, it is, until its destruction, a part of created existence: that is, although Aman is permanent, "the underlying reality or truth" (OFS, p.62), Middle-earth is still "here" and still a component of Eru's plan although it is a "fallen" world and its inhabitants are not perfect. Those who are "good" demonstrate their "goodness" by trying to establish, as far as possible, the kind of order of which they believe Eru would approve. Those who are agents for order work through evolution rather than imposition of order by force (revolution is generally not acceptable because it was through Melkor's revolution that order was disrupted in the first place). A "good" character does not try to pressure others into being "good", but recognizes the role of choice. Therefore he uses verbal persuasion, explanation and information rather than violence or the threat of violence.

Because Eru has given Arda's inhabitants the capacity to make thinking choices, "unlawful" coercion of another, even with the best intentions, and in what seems to be the best interests, is counter to Eru's order as it is intended. ("Unlawful" in this sense means a force

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19. Campbell, p.16.

20. Morgoth, Sauron, Saruman and Smaug also mistake a strong appearance for the reality and believe themselves to be permanent and invincible, basing their opinions on their fortresses and an exaggerated notion of their own power, forgetting the over-ruling control of Eru. The subject of appearance and reality is discussed in more detail below, chapter VI.

not justified by legitimate authority: thus a king has the right, and indeed obligation, to command.) It is for this reason that even the Valar do not succeed on the occasions when they try to guide Elves or Men forcibly: "if ever in their dealings with Elves and Men the Ainur have endeavoured to force them when they would not be guided, seldom has this turned to good, howsoever good the intent"; "little have the Valar ever prevailed to sway the wills of Men" (S, pp.41,68).[21] This is why Saruman's plan as outlined to Gandalf (I, pp.272-73) is wrong. Significantly, his temptation is so phrased that it reflects the original intention of the Wizards' mission: "they... were sent to contest the power of Sauron, and to unite all those who had the will to resist him; but they were forbidden to match his power with power, or to seek to dominate Elves or Men by force or fear" (III, p.365). Saruman suggests that "'we must rule. But we must have power, power to order all things as we will, for that good which only the Wise can see.... We can bide our time, we can keep our thoughts in our hearts, deploring maybe evils done by the way, but approving the high and ultimate purpose: Knowledge, Rule, Order...'"

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21. This does not contradict, for example, Ulmo's "use" of Tuor, since the latter can, like Túrin and Turgon, refuse to listen. Ulmo does not sway anyone's will: he merely warns or counsels. The "insertion" of thoughts, feelings and impulses into characters' minds cannot automatically be assumed to be the work of the Valar, and in the circumstances it seems much more likely that the power at work in such instances is Eru. His interventions are explained by his omniscience and omnipotence: he knows what will happen and is ensuring that events follow the course which he has chosen. In any case, the world and its inhabitants are his creations, and he is under no obligation to justify himself to them.

(I, p.272).[22] It is not unlikely that Saruman's peevish complaint that they have been hindered rather than helped in their objectives of order and peace by their allies has an element of truth. This is because the allies have insisted on maintaining their own individuality, and the exasperated Saruman becomes impatient and wishes to impose order by suppressing individuality - precisely contrary to the central basis of Eru's order as expressed in the Music, where each participant contributes through his individuality. Saruman's policy is that pursued by Morgoth and Sauron, while Gandalf, who "learned pity and patience" (S, p.31) from Nienna, prefers to take the longer route of evolving order through the linking of individualities. Saruman's suggestion of force aided by the Ring directly contradicts the injunction not to match power with power[23] and points, again, to imposition rather than evolution.

Since all parts of the whole must make a choice and declare allegiance to or rebellion against Eru's order and authority (not excluding

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22. This speech, as well as his last effort at Isengard to persuade Gandalf to join him (II, pp.186-87), stresses that Saruman has all the attributes of one who is or wishes to become a member of what Lewis called "the inner ring" and discusses in That Hideous Strength (London: The Bodley Head, 1945); "A Reply to Professor Haldane" in Of Other Worlds: Essays and Stories, ed. Walter Hooper (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), pp.74-85; and elsewhere. Saruman, already a member of "the inner rings" of Wizards and of the White Council, wishes to become a member of a yet more exclusive club (the rulers or "powers" of the world), and, eventually, by holding the Ring, to be the sole ruler. What is particularly interesting is that Tolkien, up to a point, approves of "the inner ring". It is quite proper for Gandalf to refuse to discuss his actions with Bilbo and the Dwarves (H, p.24); and he is quite within his rights to tell Frodo "'I am not going to give an account of all my doings to you'" (I, p. 65), since neither subject is the "business" of any outsider. One "inner ring" of which Tolkien does not approve is the one established within the Noldor by Melkor's lies. Both Tolkien and Lewis reject the idea that a "free" country should be "set to rights for its own good" by an "inner ring" or small group with a strong power base. Compare the takeover of the Shire with the attempted invasions of Narnia by Calormen in The Horse and his Boy (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1954) and The Last Battle (London: The Bodley Head, 1956).

23. That is, magic against magic. Gandalf does, in extremities, use magic to fight against the Nazgûl, the Balrog, the Wargs and other enemies, but he does not presume to use it against Sauron himself - possibly one of the reasons why Aragorn can successfully dare a confrontation through the palantír while Gandalf does not.

animals, vegetables and minerals: consider, for example, such animals as Huan, the horses of the Rohirrim and the spying crows; the malevolence of the Old Forest towards the Hobbits; and the ill will which Boromir (I, p.302) and Gimli (I, pp.303,305,306 and 307) attribute to the mountain Caradhras), the intentions of those characters who attempt to maintain or restore order are clarified and reinforced by their attitudes towards those parts of the whole outside themselves. For example, while an inhabitant of the primary world may be "good" and yet indifferent or even hostile to nature, in Tolkien's secondary world an indication of "goodness" can be detected in a person's positive feeling for nature.[24] In this respect as in others, the pervasiveness of the choice between order and disorder, encompassing all attitudes, opinions and reactions, is evident. Divine power and nature are so closely related that a positive attitude towards one automatically extends to the other, in token of which the most important and most joyful occasions, from councils to coronations to celebrations, take place outside so that the participants may be in closer contact with nature. On the other hand, nothing is a more certain index of a character's "badness" than destruction of nature, and it should be noted that those places in Middle-earth which are hostile or desolate attain that condition because of the influence of rebels against Eru. This is the case of Angband, Mordor, the Brown Lands and the "bad" parts of the Old Forest, to name only a few examples.

The Elvish love for nature, especially trees, is too obvious to be laboured. It is summed up in a conversation between Pippin and one of

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24. Because Tolkien made this traditional and conservative value a part of his secondary world does not mean, of course, that he interpreted an indifference to nature in the primary world as reliable evidence that a person was "bad", although he did fulminate against such inventions as cars and trains largely because of their destructive effect on the countryside (see Carpenter, pp.114,159). On the other hand, he was a friend of Charles Williams, who was not particularly interested in nature.

the Lórien Elves:

> "Are these magic cloaks?" asked Pippin, looking at them with wonder.
>
> "I do not know what you mean by that," answered the leader of the Elves. "They are fair garments, and the web is good, for it was made in this land. They are elvish robes certainly, if that is what you mean. Leaf and branch, water and stone: they have the hue and beauty of all these things under the twilight of Lórien that we love; for we put the thought of all that we love into all that we make."
>
> (I, p.386)

Pippin, not fully understanding the power of nature (or the nature of "magic" objects, which is discussed below), speculates that the cloaks are magic, just as Sam describes Galadriel's power as "'magic'" (I, p.376). Galadriel accepts the term hesitantly because "magic" can be applied to the power of Sauron, based on anti-natural forces, as well as her own power which is connected to nature. She is careful to distinguish between the two: "'this is what your folk would call magic, I believe; though I do not understand clearly what they mean; and they seem also to use the same word of the deceits of the Enemy. But this, if you will, is the magic of Galadriel'" (I, p.377). The generic names of the Elves (Light or Fair, Deep, Sea and Wood), tribal names (Galadhrim, Laiquendi) and many of their personal names (Celeborn, Gil-galad, Legolas) are related to nature. The High Elves are known as the Eldar, "people of the stars", which connects with nature and Elbereth ("star-queen").

The Dwarves, if less concerned with growing things, cherish a strong feeling for mountains, caves and mineral treasures. Like the Elves, their creativity is based on their connection with nature. There is no distinctive dividing line between the Ents and the trees they guard: Leaflock the Ent becomes "'tree-ish'", while trees can become "'Ent-ish'" (II, p.72). The Hobbits are ignorant of the outside world but are

closely in touch with the earth. Although they have forgotten "what little they had ever known of the Guardians /Ainur/" (I, p.14), they "'have what you might call universal morals.'"[25] Tom Bombadil is "'the Master of wood, water and hill'" (I, p.135), and his strength is that of "'the earth itself'" (I, p.279), while Goldberry can be described as a personification of water. Bard can understand the old thrush because of his historical link with nature through his ancestors. The Rangers are said to understand the languages of birds and animals, and Aragorn, "'the greatest traveller and huntsman of this age of the world'" (I, p.67), tells the Hobbits that "'I can usually avoid being seen, if I wish'" (I, pp.175-76), because he understands the earth and acts in harmony with it. Radagast is concerned with plants, birds and animals, and Gandalf is the only Wizard who is interested in trees.[26]

In contrast, Melkor destroys the work of the other Valar (including the order of nature established by Yavanna under Eru's supervision) and tries to ruin Arda because he cannot have it to himself. Smaug delights in burning woods and lands. Saruman "'has a mind of metal and wheels; and he does not care for growing things, except as far as they serve him for the moment'" (II, p.76). Sauron "'can torture and destroy the very hills'" (I, p.279). The seats of their power - Angband, the Desolation of the Dragon, Isengard and Mordor - all become areas of corruption and decay, reflecting the natures of their rulers and indicated in their names ("Iron Prison", "Iron Fortress", "Black Land").

In Arda, people "belong" to certain geographical places as well as

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25. Philip Norman, "The Hobbit Man", Sunday Times Magazine, 15 January 1967, p.35.

26. See also Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Ethical Pattern in The Lord of the Rings", Critique, 3 (Spring-Fall 1959), pp.32-33, on this point.

to places in the cosmic structure: the two concepts are both linked to the individual's identity.[27] Communities or countries are as individual as the peoples who inhabit them, and can be said to resemble them. There is a strong affinity between, for example, the Hobbits and the Shire (described as a "'fat little country'" (III, p.284) and inhabited by fat little people), the Rohirrim and Rohan (cf. II, p.112) and the Wood-elves and Lórien: "'Whether they've made the land, or the land's made them, it's hard to say'" (I, p.376). Similarly, when the Númenoreans debate sailing to Aman, they are warned "'it is not the land of Manwë that makes its people deathless, but the Deathless that dwell therein have hallowed the land'" (S, p.264).

However, consciousness of individuality and concern for a native land or correct geographical place must not be allowed to dominate a character's viewpoint to the suppression or discounting of the identities and communities of others. Boromir loses no opportunity to vaunt or hyper-sensitively defend Gondor and its role in resisting Sauron: despite his assertion that "'It would comfort us to know that others fought also with all the means that they have'" (I, p.281), he displays no particular interest in the defences offered by others. Denethor is bluntly reproved by Gandalf: "'You think, as is your wont, my lord, of Gondor only'" (III, p.87). The same attitude is seen in the parochial Hobbits, Breelanders, Rohirrim, Ents and even, initially, in the Lórien Elves' reaction to Gimli. Their respective communities have become so isolated

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27. Objects also have their correct geographical places. The Silmarils, for example, which are hallowed by Varda, do not belong and cannot remain in Middle-earth, while for the Ring the case is exactly the opposite: as Elrond says, "'they who dwell beyond the Sea would not receive it: for good or ill it belongs to Middle-earth; it is for us who still dwell here to deal with it'" (I, p.279). The palantíri, like the Númenoreans for whom they are made, "adapt": they were originally made in Eldamar, taken to Númenor and from there to Middle-earth, although their power must pass with all "supernatural" objects and beings in the Fourth Age.

that the people often have difficulty in understanding what strangers are (that is, realizing the nature ofaperson who is alien to or separate from themselves): the Hobbits do not recognize ruffians when they see them; the Breelanders do not perceive that Rangers are not ruffians; Éomer thinks Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli are either Orcs or Elves; Théoden cannot guess what the Ents are; Treebeard almost mistakes Merry and Pippin for Orcs; and Faramir and his Rangers debate whether Frodo and Sam are Orcs or Elves or something else, while the people of Minas Tirith are confused about Pippin.

Since Melkor and Sauron each wish to deny the individuality of others, they also try to obliterate the individuality of other lands and make them like Angband and Mordor. During the First Age Beleriand is devastated by Glaurung and the fires of the Fourth Battle. Sauron encroaches on Ithilien and the land immediately surrounding Mordor. Saruman, following their lead, pollutes Isengard, encroaches on Fangorn and Rohan, and encourages his agents "'to make the Shire into a desert'" (III, p.293). His Orcs and those of Sauron delight in destroying trees, which are distinguishing landscape features. However, the "evil" characters, in this as in other respects, are subject to the principles of Eru's order in that they "belong" to the geographical locations in which they base themselves. Morgoth is afraid to leave his fortress Angband after he establishes himself there. Sauron stays as much as possible in Mordor and Dol Guldur. Smaug, by the time of the invasion of Thorin and Company, is thought by the youth of Lake-town to be a figment of their elders' imagination since he so seldom leaves the mountain he has usurped. Saruman remains in Isengard as long as he can, rejecting Gandalf's offer of freedom in a world of individuals not under his control.

In contrast, the "good" characters are always keenly (sometimes uncomfortably) aware of the individuality of alien countries, which reinforces the individuality and "alien" quality of its inhabitants. Bilbo dislikes being in caves or mountains or thick forests. Gimli is uneasy in Fangorn and is much happier in Helm's Deep, while Legolas' feelings are exactly the opposite. The difference between the two is emphasized: in the forest Gimli snorts "'You are a Wood-elf, anyway, though Elves of any kind are strange folk'", while in the stone fortress Legolas retorts "'you are a dwarf, and dwarves are strange folk'" (II, pp.94 and 137). Yet each finds the alienness of his companion a source of reassurance rather than insecurity, and they make an agreement to try to appreciate the place preferred by the other. The "good" characters are willing to travel and encounter other individualities and enrich their experience. Morgoth, Sauron and Saruman, on the other hand, choose to remain in their strongholds and plan to have all other places made into "parts" of Angband, Mordor and Isengard, and to reduce every other being to extensions of self. The difference is summed up in an exchange between Treebeard and Gandalf:

> "So Saruman would not leave?" he said. "I did not think he would. His heart is as rotten as a black Huorn's. Still, if I were overcome and all my trees destroyed, I would not come while I had one dark hole left to hide in."
>
> "No," said Gandalf. "But you have not plotted to cover all the world with your trees and choke all other living things."
>
> (II, p.192)

Robley Evans observes:

> This wide-ranging selection of characters, expressive of different races, of the past and the present, of different imaginative capacity and point of view is designed by Tolkien to show the wide variety of life in

> Middle-earth. Such variety must be respected, not reduced to conform to a dominant will. Furthermore, each race and each member of that race must assume the responsibility for the support of civilization in Middle-earth to the extent of his power.... A struggle for power is inevitable... but individual beings participate in the decisions which direct the historical struggle this way or that. History is not just the inevitable working out of time in ways beyond the imagination's power. What we also see in this range of characters is a hierarchical ranking depending upon what they can do with the particular abilities at their disposal. 28

The question of each individual's "place" in the world (or, in Evans' terms, position in the "hierarchical ranking") will be examined in the next chapter.

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28. Robley Evans, J.R.R. Tolkien (New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1972), pp.163-164.

Chapter V - The Relationship between Order and "Place"

As discussed in the previous chapter, each individual and each race has a particular geographical place to which he or they belong(s). The conception of geographical place is obviously an important factor in the basis for an individual or racial identity, and in the basis for determining an individual's or race's cosmological place. Occasionally historical circumstance so changes the physical world that former geographical places, and consequently the physical context for cosmological places, are destroyed, in which case people have to find new places. When Númenor is drowned, Elendil and his sons must find new places in Middle-earth. As Ar-Pharazôn was not the rightful ruler, and therefore not fit to rule, he was destroyed, while Elendil and his family, who were not "fit" to be ruled by him, are elevated to their true stations and find their true places as kings. Elendil is caught between the old and the new: "he would gaze out over the sundering seas, when the yearning of exile was upon him" (S, p.292). Isildur and Anárion have no such dilemmas, and it is their "newer" realm of Gondor which lasts longer, because it is more able to shake off the debilitating influence of the past.

Just as individual social groups and races have particular geographical places they also have particular roles or areas of"business" which, like the geographical places, are connected with the correct cosmological place and are "natural" to them. The various races have certain tendencies and talents "built into" their natures which prompt them to assume a certain role or develop a general area of interest. This extends even to animals. When Tom Bombadil returns the Hobbits' ponies,

he advises "'You must forgive them all; for though their hearts are faithful, to face fear of Barrow-wights is not what they were made for'" (I, p.156). Particular specializations in each group's general interest are dictated by individual temperament and the local social hierarchy. The ruffians are disconcerted by the four returning Hobbits: "Scaring Breeland peasants, and bullying bewildered hobbits, had been their work. Fearless hobbits with bright swords and grim faces were a great surprise" (III, p.285). Hobbits in general are farmers and gardeners, but some (like the Tooks and Brandybucks) are "gentlehobbit" farmers, some (like the Maggots) are independent landowners, some (like the Gamgees) work on others' property, and some (like the Sandyman family) have a business connected with agriculture. The Shire can be considered a model of the kind of order which is present in the Music before Melkor disrupts it: "the voices of the Ainur, like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs, and like unto countless choirs singing with words, began to fashion the theme of Ilúvatar to a great music" (S, p.15).

All the "good" races are concerned with growing and creating with natural resources, but within these two broad areas of activity there are diversities of interest and attitude. The Elves' outlooks and interests vary from group to group: the Noldor develop smith-craft, the Teleri build ships, and the Wood-elves are particularly attentive to trees. The Dwarves are, like the Noldor, concerned with smith-craft and the possibilities of creativity using stone and metals. While they are uninterested in trees and plants, they also regard themselves as cultivators. When Legolas objects that the caverns of Helm's Deep would be marred by the Dwarves, Gimli replies "'Do you cut down groves of blossoming trees in the springtime for firewood? We would tend these glades of flowering stone, not quarry them'" (II, p.153). "Growing food and eating it" (I, p.18) is the main occupation of the Hobbits, who

have "a close friendship with the earth" (I, p.10). The Ents are tree-herds, and as such have a narrow sphere of interest compared with, for example, the Wizards, as Treebeard explains: "'I have not troubled about the Great Wars... they mostly concern Elves and Men. That is the business of Wizards: Wizards are always troubled about the future. I do not like worrying about the future'" (II, p.75). The Wizards' point of view is expressed more fully by Gandalf, the only Wizard who keeps his priorities and objectives firmly fixed: "'all worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands, those are my care. And for my part, I shall not wholly fail of my task, though Gondor should perish, if anything passes through this night that can still grow fair or bear fruit and flower again in days to come. For I also am a steward'" (III, pp.30-31).

Men, due to historical circumstances and the facts that they have shorter life-spans and a more consuming sense of ambition than members of other races, also have more diverse areas of interest. During the First Age the Edain, due to their vulnerability to the forces of Morgoth and the inevitability of death, have little opportunity to establish a tradition of their own culture, and what they do have is largely elvish in origin. It is only with the gift of Númenor that they are able to develop their own culture and pursue crafts as do the Elves, Dwarves and, to a lesser extent, the Hobbits. By the end of the Third Age historical pressure has encouraged the two major human societies of Rohan and Gondor to pursue military activities, which is appropriate since, at the beginning of the Fourth Age, it is becoming clear that it is the "business" of humans, in accordance with Eru's purposes for the fallen world, to inherit Middle-earth and dispossess the other speaking peoples by crowding them out through force of numbers.

Along with "built-in" areas of interest each race also has a weakness as a part of its nature which Morgoth and Sauron can use in their efforts to corrupt them. These weaknesses are the inevitable results of the disrupted Music. That is, for example, Elves and Men have weaknesses because the third theme which creates them utilizes notes from the turmoil of sound which Melkor makes when he falls to the weaknesses present in his own nature and rebels (presumably the other races are "foresung" during the disrupted first and second theme of the Music). Because Arda's inhabitants are created from an imperfect pattern, they are also imperfect. Dwarves are the most likely to resist: "Aulë made the Dwarves even as they still are... because the power of Melkor was yet over the earth; and he wished therefore that they should be strong and unyielding" (S, p.43). For this reason Sauron discovers, to his dismay, that the Seven Rings have comparatively little effect over the Dwarves: "The only power over them that the Rings wielded was to inflame their hearts with a greed of gold and precious things.... But they were made from their beginning of a kind to resist most steadfastly any domination. Though they could be slain or broken, they could not be reduced to shadows enslaved to another will; and for the same reason their lives were not affected by any Ring, to live either longer or shorter because of it" (III, p.358). The weakness of the Dwarves therefore lies in the same area as their strength. An appeal to their love of mineral wealth and desire for knowledge of how to increase it can corrupt them (cf. the Ringwraith's temptation of Dáin, I, p.254, and the laments of Glóin and Thorin, LR, I, pp.241-42, and H, pp.21-23). However, since they are also secretive and jealous of their rights (being first created in secret, and possibly recalling that they were nearly destroyed after they became alive, which would make them possessive and

defensive), they are more likely to prefer to discover and make what they can without outside interference.

Elves are shown as being more vulnerable to the wiles of Morgoth and Sauron. Their generic weakness is a desire for more knowledge, an abstract rather than a concrete value. Melkor corrupts the Noldor in Valinor by offering them knowledge: "the Noldor took delight in the hidden knowledge that he could reveal to them" (S, p.66). He secretly reveals that human beings will eventually appear in Middle-earth, a fact which the Valar had kept hidden, and tells them of Noldorin realms which might have been. Specifically addressing himself to the ruling family, he offers a different kind of "knowledge": "Melkor set new lies abroad in Eldamar, and whispers came to Fëanor that Fingolfin and his sons were plotting to usurp the leadership of Finwë and of the elder line of Fëanor.... But to Fingolfin and Finarfin it was said: 'Beware!... It will not be long before he drives you forth from Túna!'" (S, p.69). Similarly, Celebrimbor and his followers are deceived by Sauron "for... the Noldor desired ever to increase the skill and subtlety of their works.... Therefore they hearkened to Sauron, and they learned of him many things" (S, p.287). Thranduil and Maeglin are two exceptions. Thranduil knows how great the hoards of past kings have been, and wishes to increase his own. Maeglin has great knowledge of smith-craft, but it does not bring him what he wants.

Ents and Hobbits offer more difficulty to external forces such as Saruman who try to corrupt them. Ents are virtually impossible to tempt, not necessarily because they are so close to nature (birds, animals and trees can be corrupted, cf. S, p.294 and LR, I, pp.141 and 298), but because Saruman cannot offer them anything that they want. The Ents

want safety and prosperity for their trees, and this is directly antithetical to what he requires, in that destruction of nature is indicative of his "badness", part of his "badness" and even necessary to his "badness" since his furnaces and forges require wood in order to operate. Ents can become false to their nature as Ents - thinking beings - by retreating into "tree-ishness" or becoming irrationally wild and angry as do the Huorns who must be guided by the "'true Ents'" (II, p.170). Hobbits are slightly easier prey since they are materialistic in outlook and temperament, and it is through the temptation of more land, more produce and consequently more money and possessions (and power), that Saruman tempts Lotho to leave his place, while Sandyman attaches himself to Lotho on similar grounds. However, the vast majority of Hobbits are uninterested in changing the order which they have always maintained.

Men are the most likely of Arda's inhabitants to be swayed away from behaviour upholding the desired or desirable state of order. They are peculiarly vulnerable because of one of Eru's gifts: "he willed that the hearts of Men should seek beyond the world and should find no rest therein" (S, p.41). This gift of ceaseless ambition means that Men can achieve apparently impossible tasks in pursuit of order, but it also causes them to attempt genuinely impossible feats, get out of their places and contribute to the forces of chaos. Association with the potentially immortal Elves, who know where they will go if they happen to die, leads Men to want more life as well, or at least reassurance as to what will happen to them after death. However, the Ainur are able to offer neither:

> And the Númenoreans answered: "Why should we not envy the Valar, or even the least of the Deathless? For of us is required a blind trust, and a hope without

> assurance, knowing not what lies before us in a little while. And yet we also love the Earth and would not lose it."
>
> The Messengers said: "Indeed the mind of Ilúvatar concerning you is not known to the Valar, and he has not revealed all things that are to come."
>
> (S, p.265)

The Númenoreans are unimpressed with this argument, "for they wished still to escape death in their own day, not waiting upon hope" (S, pp. 265-66). As William Blake puts it, "If the many become the same as the few when possess'd, More! More! is the cry of a mistaken soul: less than All cannot satisfy Man. If any could desire what he is incapable of possessing, despair must be his eternal lot."[1] This tendency - to want more and to despair when it becomes clear that they cannot have it - makes it easy for Sauron to bring Ar-Pharazôn and his followers under his control, and to make the king his instrument: "Ar-Pharazôn... grew to be the mightiest tyrant that had yet been in the world since the reign of Morgoth, though in truth Sauron ruled all from behind the throne" (S, p.274). The attempt of the Númenoreans to conquer "the Deathless, to wrest from them everlasting life within the Circles of the World" (S, p.278) fails. However, the nine Men who become Nazgûl do achieve immortality, although they do not escape despair: "They had, as it seemed, unending life, yet life became unendurable to them" (S, p.289). They become dependent on, and virtually parts of Sauron, and lose themselves because they betray the nature of their race. They stop being Men, and become Ringwraiths, just as the "Mouth of Sauron", originally a Númenorean, also becomes immortal but forgets his own name.

It is readily seen from this discussion that the greatest danger present to Arda's inhabitants is that of excess or disproportion. There

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1. William Blake, "There Is No Natural Religion", [b] and VI, in The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, ed. David Erdman, rev. (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1970).

is a constant temptation to betray Eru's order and fall into wrongdoing through the combination of a concentration of too much power in a particular area of concern and an excessive self-regard. There are different areas or kinds of power depicted in Tolkien's works: creative artistic power, familial power (that is, the power held by the head of a family), political power, the power of strength and fighting ability, the power of "magic", and social power, attaching to one who has rank and wealth in the community. A character who obtains too much of any one kind of power often tries to assume control over the other areas of power, in accordance with the pattern established by Melkor when he disrupts the Music. Too much power in an area is against the original harmony of the Music, during which each Ainu had and used a certain defined kind and amount of power. Melkor attempts to drown out the other participants and usurp their provinces of power. He tries to negate individuality and the hierarchy in that he tries to subordinate other heads of power. It is an effort (as displayed by Saruman and Sauron) to make everyone and everything a reflection or part of self. To a lesser extent this tendency is also shown in other characters. For example, Fëanor jealously keeps the Silmarils from the sight of others because he misunderstands and misuses the rights of an artist, and nearly usurps his father's rights as head of the family and King of the Noldor and tries to defraud Fingolfin and Finarfin of their rights as his brothers and princes in their own right. Thingol is determined to exercise his paternal power to the exclusion of Lúthien's rights as an individual, and is sensitive about his political power. Ar-Pharazôn is not content with being King of the Kings of Men (the Númenoreans) but wishes to be King of (all) Men and King of the World (titles claimed by Morgoth and Sauron). Saruman tries to exercise his power as Head of the Council and his great

power of wisdom to "'become a Power'" (II, p.76) - that is, to rise from being a Maia to become a Vala, one of the "powers of the World". Lotho is not content with being the Master of Bag End and tries to become the Chief of the Shire, to which Pippin's father objects on the grounds that "'if anyone was going to play the chief at this time of day, it would be the right Thain of the Shire and no upstart'" (III, p.289).

There are checks "built into" the world system which are intended to prevent the people who hold power from gaining too much of it, or the kind of power to which they are not entitled, and consequently getting out of place. Some of these checks are a part of the business attached to a powerful person's role, and some are imposed by an external authority. The system of restraints is a reflection of the Music. The restraints inherent in each person's role can be seen in the checks placed on each Ainu by the requirements and limitations of his/her part in the Music, and the external checks are versions of Ilúvatar's interventions when he interrupts the foundering course of the Music and re-directs it. Thus, for example, the Valar are restrained by each of them being in control of a particular area or province in the world (for example, Manwë-air, Varda-light, Ulmo-water, Aulë-earth). When they descend to Arda they agree to acknowledge the boundaries of the world and limit their powers. Melkor originally "had a share in all the gifts of his brethren" (S, p.16), but when he tries to extend his powers he is limited by his desire to keep Varda's light and the world (the work of all) to himself and finds that he can only use fire and darkness, with which he tries to conquer light and overwhelm the world. (Possibly the key to Melkor's problem lies in the multiplicity given him by Eru to further the latter's designs, in that if Melkor had had some definite area external to himself to concentrate on, he would have a more or less exclusive interest.

Lacking such a focus, he concentrates on himself, represented by the Void.)[2]

More generally, all leaders or rulers have certain powers but also certain obligations or requirements as part of the leadership role, since they are representative of the ultimate authority figures Manwë and Eru (Manwë also operates under checks, and Eru is, so to speak, limited by his own decisions). The duties of the leadership role are checks inherent in the abstract social system. Leaders often also have counsellors (as do the Númenoreans and Gondoreans, while the Kings of Rohan have Marshalls) who act, or try to act, or are supposed to act, as external restraints on the leader. And while it is possible for a leader to become a tyrant and abuse his people, it is obvious that, ultimately, leaders govern only because they are permitted to do so by their followers. The governed therefore act (whether in person or through social tradition, custom and expectation) as an inherent restraint as "society", and as an external restraint because of the danger of a potential uprising, as seen in the Kin-strife in Gondor. At the same time the followers of a leader are obliged to obey his decrees (except when they are against natural theology, which would make the leader a rebel). Thus, although neither Ulmo nor Tulkas agree with Manwë's decision to free Melkor, "they obeyed the judgement of Manwë; for those who will defend authority against rebellion must not themselves rebel" (S, p.66).

Another restraint which is a fundamental part of Arda, and which usually works against the "good" rather than the "evil" characters, is that of opposing forces (the "negative" aspect of this restraint - the fact that it is often a hindrance to the "good" - possibly arises because

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2. Because Melkor's multiplicity is given by Eru and the latter decides all things, the inference is that he installs the potential for rebellion through the multiplicity, ensuring that the Vala will rebel.

the Music was originally a pattern of complements rather than of oppositions, and the "law" of opposing forces comes with Melkor's disruptive opposition). In terms of power, it requires a member of the same racial or generic group, and therefore approximately the same genetic power, to oppose successfully a Vala, for example, who has been corrupted. A knowledge of this balance encourages a powerful potential tyrant to abuse those less powerful than himself, but it can also caution the "good" characters against premature or hopelessly rash attacks, and indicates what sort of and how much power they need to defeat the tyrant. Therefore Fëanor and the other rebellious Noldor cannot hope to best Morgoth, and Finrod, whose motives are better than Fëanor's, cannot defeat Sauron in the contest of song-magic. Huan can defeat Sauron because both are natives of Valinor and because Sauron, by changing himself into a wolf, has elected to fight on Huan's own terms. Lúthien can subdue Carcharoth once because "suddenly some power, descended from of old from divine race, possessed Lúthien" (S, p.180): this can be interpreted as power within her which she inherited from Melian, or an external intervention taking the form of a gift of extra power (cf. Sam on Mount Doom, III, p.218). Glorfindel, one of the exiled Noldor, can stand against the originally mortal Nazgûl, although not against all nine at once even with Aragorn's help (it would seem that Aragorn, who has his own inborn "supernatural" powers because of his ancestry, can also withstand the Ringwraiths to a certain extent). Gandalf, a Maia whose power is in fire, can (barely) master the Balrog, a corrupted Maia whose kind are termed "scourges of fire" (S, p.31). Treebeard tells Gandalf"'"Wood and water, stock and stone, I can master; but there is a Wizard to manage here."'" Gandalf replies "'"I have ten thousand Orcs to manage"'" (II, p.175), and he enlists the Ents' help against those who have damaged

their trees and lands. Similarly Tom Bombadil can control "'Wood, water and hill'" (the Willow, Goldberry and the Barrow-wight) but adds that he "' is not master of Riders from the Dark Land far beyond his country'" (I, p.159). Aragorn's will conquers Sauron's will - that is, he has a stronger personality - but there is no question of his matching the Dark Lord in terms of force, just as Gandalf cannot match him in a contest of magic. The distinction is evident in Legolas' appraisal: "'I ... thought how great and terrible a Lord he [Aragorn] might have become in the strength of his will, had he taken the Ring to himself. Not for naught does Mordor fear him. But nobler is his spirit than the understanding of Sauron; for is he not of the children of Lúthien?'" (III, p.152). The reference to Lúthien is significant: Lúthien forced Sauron to surrender the control of Tol-in-Gaurhoth, and Sauron does not consider it unlikely that her descendant will attempt to wrest from him the mastery of Mordor.

Still another restraint on excessive power in Arda lies in the structure of the social hierarchy, which is part of the order expressed in the Music in that some of the Ainur take precedence over others, and there are leading parts and supporting parts. Tolkien has been criticized more than once for propagating the class system in his books.[3] What critics have missed is the fact that, in the secondary world, while "inferiors" owe their "superiors" respect because of their relative place in the social structure, the members of the upper classes are obliged to treat the members of the lower classes with consideration and a regard

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3. See, for example, Roger Sale, "Tolkien and Frodo Baggins", in Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R. R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), pp.247-88; Gerard O'Connor, "Why Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings Should Not be Popular Culture", Extrapolation, 13 (1972), 48-55; and Catharine R. Stimpson, J.R.R. Tolkien, Columbia Essays on Modern Writers, No.41 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

for their intrinsic "human" dignity (just as the leading "good" Ainur do not try to drown out lesser voices but allow all singers to take their proper roles). By doing so, they restrain the potential for abuse which is a part of their elevated positions. For example, the Gamgees, Maggots and Cottons are consistent in their respectful attitudes to the Baggins, Brandybuck and Took families. However, Bilbo justifies Hamfast's opinion of him as "'A very nice well-spoken gentlehobbit'" by being "very polite to him, calling him 'Master Hamfast', and consulting him constantly upon the growing of vegetables - in the matter of 'roots', especially potatoes, the Gaffer was recognized as the leading authority by all in the neighbourhood (including himself)" (I, p.30). Bilbo acknowledges and respects the Gaffer both for his own worth and for his knowledge. In contrast, the Sackville-Bagginses are rude to their social equals, and fail to treat those below them in the social hierarchy with even "common" courtesy. Lobelia "showed plainly that she thought the Gamgees capable of plundering the hole during the night" (I, p.78). The Gaffer's attitude towards the Sackville-Bagginses is evident in his pointed remark: "'Mr. Frodo Baggins is a real gentlehobbit, I always have said, whatever you may think of some others of the name'" (III, p.293). Unable to gain social or personal respect from others because he fails to show them respect, Lotho resorts to coercion and physical force.

Those powerful characters who are not satisfied with the hierarchy or with their places in it often use "supernatural" or "magical" objects to try to modify the power attached to their relative places. Most of the objects - the Trees, the Silmarils, the palantíri, the Three Rings - are beautiful in themselves and originally intended for positive ends. Yavanna makes the Two Trees so that they can act as sources of light, beauty and joy. The Silmarils, holding the light of the Trees, fulfil

a similar purpose: "they rejoiced in light and received it and gave it back in hues more marvellous than before." Because of their beauty all those "who dwelt in Aman were filled with wonder and delight at the work of Fëanor" (S, p.67). The palantíri are used for long distance communication and to increase knowledge, while the Three Rings are used for "'understanding, making and healing, to preserve all things unstained'" (I, p.282).

The use of these objects, however, and of magic in general, is limited because the objects and the magical effects must remain true to their own nature. This is yet another "built in" check on characters who seek unjustified power. The Trees are not "good for" anything except light, beauty and joy because that is the area in which their power lies. Because Morgoth cannot possess them for himself alone, he encourages Ungoliant to destroy them. He thus perverts their power in a sense by causing darkness, ugliness and distress in their loss. He can possess the Silmarils (since they are portable and the Trees are not), and in them, the light of the Trees. He thus causes war, destruction and death, in contradiction to the environment and culture which produced them (after Fëanor has behaved, not as extremely, but in the same manner as Morgoth). However, the Silmarils remain true to themselves regardless of who holds them for what purpose: "Varda hallowed the Silmarils, so thereafter no mortal flesh, nor hands unclean, nor anything of evil will might touch them, but it was scorched and withered" (S, p.67). Therefore the Silmaril taken by Beren does not harm him but burns Carcharoth. Maedhros, Maglor and Morgoth are all similarly affected: they all ignore the "communal" purpose of the jewels and try to keep them for themselves alone. The elven Rings cannot be used against Sauron because "'they

were not made as weapons of war or conquest: that is not their power'" (I, p.282). The One Ring cannot be used successfully for good purposes because it is intrinsically "evil", as the Silmarils are intrinsically "good". The palantíri are "neutral", and therefore cannot show anything but facts, although they can be manipulated with regard to what facts they show. The elven cloaks will protect their wearers by hiding them and making them blend with nature since they are the products of a hidden people and have the properties of the substances which have gone into their creation. However, "'they are garments, not armour, and they will not turn shaft or blade'" (I, p.386).

Those who are able to use magic must follow basic rules. Just as the world is made out of the Music, or rather out of the substances (air, earth, water) which are created by the Music, so Fëanor must have something from which to make the Silmarils: the light of Yavanna's Trees and the minerals of the earth created by Aulë. Gandalf, although skilled in the use of fire, must have fuel to burn. Galadriel, one of the artistic Noldor and skilled, like all Elves, in words and music, can make Lórien in song (as Yavanna sings the Trees into being) because she has a more powerful version of "the gift of the Elf-minstrels, who can make the things of which they sing appear before the eyes of those that listen" (III, p.338). Similarly, those who use the objects cannot receive more from them than they are able to use according to their personal natures. Thus, Gollum can achieve only a petty power from the Ring, while Sauron would be able to dominate the world. In luring Boromir, therefore, the Ring is maintaining its own nature in that, as an object whose purpose is in domination, it will exercise much more power in the hands of the overbearing Boromir than if it remains with Frodo (and it is also much more likely to attract Sauron's attention).

The reason Frodo is successful in resisting the temptation of the Ring is that he, like it, is true to his own personality. According to the operative rules, the Ring appeals to a dominant trait in a person's nature and promises an increase of power in that particular area. Sauron makes the Ring because it will enable him to dominate others in all respects. Boromir is interested in increased military strength leading to kingship, which he feels belongs with his family (or, more specifically, with himself) rather than the genuine ruler. Sam wishes to make Mordor a garden, and Gollum is delighted by the thought of being "'The Gollum'" and eating "'fish every day, three times a day, fresh from the sea'" (II, p.241).

Bilbo unwittingly serves the Ring's purpose by picking it up while hardly being aware of it. The Ring gains its hold on him by playing on his concern with individual worth and integrity. While Bilbo does not in the least regret his lost "respectability", he is shown as being consistently interested in his own identity and in honesty in general. He first volunteers to go on the trip because of Glóin's personally disparaging remark, he returns the Elf-guard's keys so that the latter will not be accused of conspiring with the prisoners, he expects Thorin to deal honestly with the treasure, he offers Thranduil the necklace in return for his "hospitality", and he tells the Elvenking and Bard "'I may be a burglar... but I am an honest one, I hope, more or less'" (H, p.249). Most importantly, he spares Gollum because the latter suddenly becomes a person to him, instead of a nasty slimy threatening creature. Consciousness of his own integrity makes him, ironically, bend the truth when telling the story of his acquisition of the Ring: "'I only wished to claim the treasure as my very own in those days, and to be rid of the name of thief that was put on me'" (I, p.262). His continuing

unopposed possession of the Ring "proves" that it is his and that he is not a thief, and it is this attitude which is strongly evident in his interview with Gandalf: "'what business is it of yours, anyway, to know what I do with my own thing? It is my own. I found it. It came to me.... It is mine isn't it? I found it, and Gollum would have killed me, if I hadn't kept it. I'm not a thief, whatever he said'" (I, p.42).

Perhaps most surprising is Isildur's obsession with the Ring, which seems to be based on a love of beauty. The scrolls quoted by Gandalf do not indicate that he is aware of the Ring's potential for military power. What the scroll does emphasize is the Ring's beauty (more apparent when the verse written in the "'foul and uncouth'" (I, p.266) Black Speech disappears). He wants the Ring as weregild for his father and brother, and it is not unlikely that Isildur, raised in the Númenorean culture with all its beautiful crafts and products and having lost nearly everything in the destruction of Númenor and the devastating war against Sauron, is determined to save what beauty he can. It is partly in this hope that he plants the White Tree in Minas Anor in memory of Anárion, and it was he who, at much risk and great cost, saved the fruit of the original White Tree in Númenor.

However, Frodo has none of these dominant interests. Frodo stands out from the contented materialistic Hobbits because his dominant characteristic is renunciation and a desire to be free (this is only appropriate in the central hero of a book very largely concerned with the negative aspects of possessiveness). Just before Bilbo's party, Frodo offers to come with him, and although the old Hobbit correctly tells Gandalf that Frodo is not yet ready to give up the Shire, he

evidently realizes that the tendency is there. After Bilbo leaves, Frodo says to Gandalf "'I would give them /the Sackville-Bagginses/ Bag End and everything else, if I could get Bilbo back and go off tramping in the country with him'" (I, p.49). After the first adjustment is over, Frodo "found being his own master and the Mr. Baggins of Bag End was rather pleasant. For some years he was quite happy.... But half unknown to himself the regret that he had not gone with Bilbo was steadily growing" (I, p.52). On the journey to Rivendell he does not think as constantly of his stomach as do the other Hobbits (or Bilbo in The Hobbit). At Rivendell he tells Glóin that he would rather see Bilbo "'than all the towers and palaces in the world'" (I, p.242). In the end he renounces the Shire twice: when he first leaves with the Ring, and when he leaves Middle-earth.

Given such a tendency, the Ring has a difficult task in tempting him, because the necessary element - a dominating area of interest in which it can offer increase of power - is lacking in his character, and therefore, from the viewpoint of the "good" characters, it is safest in his hands (although the rule about offering power proportionate to its holder also applies, so that even if Frodo were to claim the Ring he could do less damage than a more powerful person). This is why Gandalf comments "'Bilbo made no mistake in choosing his heir, though he little thought how important it would prove'" (I, p.72). Frodo is frequently pressured towards (or into) putting on the Ring by an external force (one of Sauron's agents, or the Ring itself), but his own will, expressing his lack of desire for power, or an intervention (such as is offered by Gandalf on Amon Hen), usually enables him to resist or to escape the worst consequences. He cannot be so saved on Mount Doom, "the heart of the realm of Sauron... all other powers were here subdued" (III, p.222) - including Frodo's will. He succumbs to the pressure of Sauron's

presence (in absentia, so to speak) and the pressure of the Ring, which does not want to be destroyed. When Frodo becomes the Lord of the Rings, he thus gains the attention of Sauron, who will, the Ring hopes, be able to rescue it and return it to its proper place so that it can fulfil its intended function.

Some critics have asserted that Tolkien condemns the wish or search for power, but this is not the case.[4] It is only when a character seeks too much power (as does Lotho when he tries to buy up and control the Shire), or seeks it in the wrong way (which is what Denethor does when he uses the palantír), or tries to achieve a form of power to which he is not entitled (as when Fëanor expresses a wish to control the Light of Arda), that Tolkien shows the results as negative. Power is not "bad" in itself, but gained or used incorrectly it can have negative consequences. Conversely, the proper power in the hands of the proper person used properly leads to positive results. For example, Aragorn's efforts to regain the throne of Gondor and establish the Reunited Kingdom are justified and rewarded. Tolkien demonstrates these complementary principles by setting up a number of temptations to different kinds of power, for a variety of purposes, and tests his characters. Most of the leaders in The Lord of the Rings are offered an opportunity of enhanced power by a "supernatural" person or object: Gandalf, Aragorn, Galadriel, Boromir, Faramir, Sam and Frodo all have opportunities to take and use the Ring; Elrond, Círdan and Isildur were similarly tested at the end of the Second Age. Saruman and Denethor seize on the prospects of greater knowledge and therefore power which they are offered

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4. This is the position taken by Stimpson; Donald Davie, "On Hobbits and Intellectuals", Encounter, 33 (October 1969), 87-92; and Agnes Perkins and Helen Hill, "The Corruption of Power", in A Tolkien Compass, ed. Jared C. Lobdell (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing Co., 1975), pp.57-68.

by the palantíri. Théoden is invited by Saruman to form an alliance to bring peace and superlative prosperity to Rohan.[5] In The Hobbit, Thorin is tempted to keep all the treasure, to which he is not entitled (especially after he makes his bargain with Bard). In The Silmarillion Melkor sets the pattern for this tendency by trying to accrue power that he has not been given by Ilúvatar. Sauron and other Maiar follow his example, as do Fëanor and the Noldor as a group, Thingol, Eöl, Maeglin and Túrin.

In the power struggle, in which the "good" characters attempt to oust "evil" beings from those places which the latter have usurped, different forms of communication which declare the allegiance of each person to order or chaos play an important role. Communication, which operates in various ways, is the subject of the next chapter.

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5. This point is made, with a somewhat different perspective, by Paul H. Kocher, in Master of Middle-Earth: The Fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972), pp.50-51.

Chapter VI - The Relationship between Order and Communication

Because the struggle between order and chaos pervades all aspects of the secondary world, appearance is an indication of a character's allegiance, just as his attitude towards nature and towards alien beings separate from himself point towards his willingness or unwillingness to recognize Eru's authority. Therefore, when a character begins to seek power to which he is not entitled and tries to usurp someone else's place, a discord between appearance and reality becomes a significant factor of communication in the development of events. A universal adherence to Eru's order would mean a universal and unquestionable harmony between appearance and reality: a person or object would be exactly what the appearance indicates, because the appearance, like "business" or role, would go with the position. And since a universal adherence to Eru's order would mean that all beings would conform to Eru's positive will - the will which, in the present disordered circumstances, is moving the cosmos towards a manifestation of absolute goodness and perfection - all appearances would be positive, because they would reflect positive realities. Throughout the history of Arda, it is usually assumed that appearance reflects reality, and when a character is not deliberately in disguise, the rule is valid. That is, unlike the primary world, "good" characters are beautiful, attractive or appealing, and "bad" characters are ugly or revolting. The natural form resembles the nature of the personality which inhabits it, unless the person in question deliberately goes to pains to conceal or change the appearance. A detected discrepancy between the two is used as a basis for assuming treachery and willing deceit. A disguising appearance can be penetrated and the reality

disclosed by a perceptive observer. When the reality has been disclosed, however, it still remains to be discovered why the deceptive character masked the reality in the first place, since a discrepancy can be used either to further disorder or in an effort to maintain or restore order.

As might be expected, Melkor is the first deceiver. Because he rebels against order and initially hides his reality under false pretences, those who follow the pattern of action he establishes also dissemble: "he feigned, even to himself at first, that he desired to go thither and order all things for the good of the Children of Ilúvatar" (S, p.18). When he irrevocably declares the purpose of his ambition - to keep the world for himself alone - further disguise is pointless. When he perceives the other Valar taking beautiful shapes, "His envy grew then the greater within him; and he also took visible form, but because of his mood and the malice that burned in him that form was dark and terrible. And he descended upon Arda in power and majesty greater than any other of the Valar" (S, pp.21-22). His appearance is indicative of two truths: his "badness", and the amount of his power relative to the other Valar. Melkor eventually becomes "fixed" in this form, and must, in this as in other matters, conform to the appearance-reality equation (intended as a sign of order) despite his perversion of it.

Because the truth can be disguised, an intrinsic part of the struggle for order is the search for reality.[1] A restoration of order means a restoration of the "underlying reality or truth" (OFS, p.62). The search for truth is necessary because of the move away from the

1. See Robley Evans, J.R.R. Tolkien (New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1972), pp.38-39 for a discussion on this point.

simple obvious evidence of Eru's will as manifested in order, which means that there is a consequent difficulty or ambiguity in knowing the correct course of action. At the end of the First Age, Maedhros and Maglor, although they have gone against the Valar's advice and caused disruption and disorder, yet hopefully conclude "'Since one [of the Silmarils] is lost to us, and but two remain, and we two alone of our brothers, so is it plain that fate would have us share the heirlooms of our father'" (S, p.253). When the Silmarils burn them, however, it becomes plain that "fate" (or Eru) means no such thing. They misinterpret the appearance of the situation because they do not realize that the situation can no longer be judged on the basis that appearance equals reality since events have been distorted, partly because of the disorder which their own distorted outlooks helped to introduce.

It is because a rejection of order and a concealment of the rejection are both possible that treachery and the threat of treachery become significant factors in the development of history. Made anxious by the Prophecy of the North about treachery, Fëanor resolves to betray others before they can betray him, apparently unconscious of his own betrayals in his selfishness concerning the Silmarils, his hostility towards his relatives, his defiance of the Valar, and his theft from and murder of the Teleri. Fëanor is, however, too straightforward a character to dissemble. He does not conceal his lack of brotherly love; when he decides that the Valar are ineffectual and restrictive he does not hesitate to say so; he takes the Teleri ships by force rather than fraud; and after leaving secretly he burns the ships at Losgar as a sign to Fingolfin and his followers that they have been deserted. His five younger sons experience occasional flashes of sincerity when

they do not conceal their hostile feelings towards their cousins, as in Caranthir's outburst at Angrod and his brothers, but as a general policy they dissemble. Several of them secretly resent Maedhros' resignation of the Noldorin leadership to Fingolfin's house, and Celegorm and Curufin secretly undermine Finrod's rule in Nargothrond and behave deviously towards Lúthien. The brothers resort to open violence only when they cannot achieve their ambitions through deceit. (The silence of the Noldor as a group on their flight from Aman until the truth is unearthed by Melian is not exactly treacherous, but it is not an example of sterling honesty either.) The same policy of fraud where possible and violence when necessary is also practised by Eöl and Maeglin, as well as the treacherous Easterlings allied with Caranthir. This is Melkor's policy, and it is also used by Sauron during the Second Age, when he deceives the Elves as the apparently beneficent Annatar, and appears to the Númenoreans in an attractive shape. By the end of the Third Age, nearly every major social group has a hidden traitor: Lotho and Sandyman in the Shire, Bill Ferny and Harry Goatleaf in Bree,[2] Boromir in the Fellowship, Saruman on the White Council, Wormtongue in Rohan, Shagrat and Gorbag (potentially, in that they plan desertion) in Mordor, Leaflock and Skinbark (in that they have abdicated their responsibilities) in Fangorn, Denethor in Gondor. Even the elven kingdom of Mirkwood is not safe: it is hinted that Gollum escapes by treachery. Rivendell and Lórien are free of the problem, but they are both depicted as islands under siege, and in both communities the leaders take care to preserve as much secrecy about their counsels and plans as possible.

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2. It is worth noting that Lotho, Sandyman, Bill Ferny and Harry Goatleaf are generally unattractive, associate with unattractive people, have unattractive residences, and are considered socially undesirable.

"Good" characters are occasionally forced to use deception if they find themselves in disordered or "untrue" situations which will not support the truth. In such circumstances order is promoted through a disguise which deceives the agents of disorder. That a discrepancy between appearance and reality exists means disorder, and the use of deception to bring about order is another instance of a disruptive factor being used to further the cause of order and bring "good" out of "evil." For example, during the quest of the Silmaril, Beren, Finrod, Lúthien and Huan all resort to various disguises, and during the Third Age Gandalf and the Rangers all appear to be much less than they really are, and in fact are regarded as agents or potential agents of disorder. These are deliberately assumed disguises, as are the first fair appearances of Melkor and Sauron, and they can be penetrated by those who are sufficiently observant and discerning. When Gandalf first approaches Bilbo about the expedition to Erebor, the latter cannot see any more than what he is expecting to see: "All that the unsuspecting Bilbo saw that morning was an old man with a staff" (H, p.3). However, Frodo benefits from Bilbo's experience, and since he is quite suspicious by the time he reaches Bree he is able to perceive something of the truth about Aragorn (Sam, more parochial and inexperienced, remains dubious, while Pippin hovers between the two opinions). Éomer and Éowyn, who, like the Hobbits, learn about the world, are also able to see something of the reality behind Aragorn's appearance, and they, like everyone else in Rohan except the fast-failing Théoden, can detect the malice in Wormtongue. Similarly, Gandalf distrusts Saruman, Gil-galad and Elrond are suspicious of Annatar, and Idril dislikes Maeglin. In a case such as Boromir, where the change in his attitude develops gradually as the Ring's power over him grows, it is still

possible to detect the reality although the appearance remains relatively stable. Frodo (I, p.385), Pippin (p.398) and Sam (p.419) all note changes in his eyes and voice, but it is when he actually attacks Frodo that his appearance suddenly changes, with his momentary but complete loss of self, to reflect the truth: "His fair and pleasant face was hideously changed; a raging fire was in his eyes" (I, p.415).

The situation becomes more complicated when a character has two separate realities, or a present reality and a potential reality, because it is then more difficult to discern exactly where he stands in the order-disorder struggle. Hobbits look like what they are: smug, provincial and materialistic, and yet they "could survive rough handling by grief, foe, or weather in a way that astonished those who did not know them well and looked no further than their bellies and their well-fed faces" (I, p.15). Throughout The Hobbit the Elves and Gandalf are the only people who know what Bilbo is and what sort of action he is able and likely to take. It is by his actions and associates that Bilbo is judged by the trolls, the goblins, Gollum, the eagles, Beorn, the spiders, the Lake-men, and Smaug, rather than by a knowledge of Bilbo himself. They all know exactly how to judge and behave towards the Dwarves because of the fact that they are unambiguously and unmistakably Dwarves. Aragorn, seeing Frodo and his companions behave foolishly at Bree, takes them at face-value, but later admits his mistake: "'I can only say that hobbits are made of a stuff so tough that I have never met the like of it. Had I known, I would have spoken softer in the Inn at Bree!'" (I, p.342). They have the potential to become heroes: "There is a seed of courage hidden (often deeply, it is true) in the heart of the fattest and most timid

hobbit, waiting for some final and desperate danger to make it grow" (I, p.151). Bilbo rejects the assertion that he seems "'more like a grocer than a burglar'" (H, p.17), and his opinion is endorsed, somewhat enigmatically, by Gandalf: "'I have chosen Mr. Baggins, and that ought to be enough for all of you. If I say he is a Burglar, a Burglar he is, or will be when the time comes. There is a lot more in him than you guess, and a deal more than he has any idea of himself'" (H, p.18). After Bilbo surrenders the Arkenstone, the Wizards repeats "'There is always more about you than anyone expects!'" (H, p.250). After Frodo has stabbed a troll and survived a heavy attack in Moria, Gandalf tells him that he takes after Bilbo: "'There is more about you than meets the eye, as I said of him long ago.' Frodo wondered if the remark meant more than it said" (I, p.342). Upon their return to the Shire, the Hobbits' appearances have changed to reflect the change in their characters, experience and outlook. Most obviously, Merry and Pippin have become the largest Hobbits in history: they have grown literally and metaphorically. The loss of Frodo's mortality is seen in the loss of his Ring-finger with the Ring. These changes are appropriate since part of the order-restoring process involves a coinciding of appearance and reality. One of the indications which alerts Gandalf to the possible identity of the Ring is the fact Bilbo does not appear to grow any older. The Ring, agent of disorder, is producing a distorting effect by creating a gap between how old he seems to be and how old he really is.

Even more complex are the physical changes experienced by Gollum, who, Gandalf thinks, "'was not wholly ruined. He had proved tougher than even one of the Wise would have guessed - as a hobbit might. There was a little corner of his mind that was still his own, and light

came through it, as through a chink in the dark: light out of the past. It was actually pleasant, I think, to hear a kindly voice again...'" (I, p.64). The "little corner" of his original, not evil (if not exactly "good" - the ambiguity is possible because of the disorder of the world situation) nature is reflected in his momentary change on the stairs of Cirith Ungol: "A strange expression passed over his lean hungry face. The gleam faded from his eyes, and they went dim and grey, old and tired.... For a fleeting moment, could one of the sleepers have seen him, they would have thought that they beheld an old weary hobbit, shrunken by the years that had carried him far beyond his time, beyond friends and kin, and the fields and streams of youth, an old starved pitiable thing" (II, p.324). True to Gandalf's prediction, the momentary glimpse of "light" in the "good" part of him makes "'the evil part of him angrier in the end'" (I, p.64; cf. H, p.69: "these ordinary aboveground everyday sort of riddles were tiring for him. Also they reminded him of the days when he had been less lonely and sneaky and nasty, and that put him out of temper"). When Sam rebukes him, "a green glint flickered under his heavy lids. Almost spider-like he looked now..." (II, p.324; this is immediately after he has betrayed them to Shelob; cf. also II, pp.220, 221, 223, 232, 240-41, 251-52, 253 for relevant connecting descriptions of Gollum).

Since deceptive appearances are adopted by people who are out of place and trying to get into what they believe are their proper places, for disguised characters to discard their disguises and make the appearance accord with the reality would hinder their efforts to achieve their individual visions of order. (In this sense the partially deceptive appearances of the Hobbits - the softness which does not reveal their toughness and potential for courage and resolution - may

be regarded as "natural camouflage", a gift from Eru which they are unaware that they possess or might need in the historical situations in which he places them. In fact, the softness and placidity of their appearance are appropriate to the state of their society, which is, on the surface at least, relatively ordered.) The truth becomes revealed at the correct time. Melkor, Sauron and other traitors eventually reach critical points at which they must declare themselves as agents of disorder, if for no other reason than the truth has been discovered and deception will no longer serve. When a "good" character voluntarily casts aside a disguise, it is an indication that a crisis of resolution is approaching. Aragorn reveals himself to Sauron because "'I deemed that the time was ripe, and that the Stone had come to me for just such a purpose'" (III, p.155). Sauron does not see him as a weather-worn Ranger (which he is), but as a king, which he also is, and which reality is becoming obvious to more and more people (not just the discerning few) as the situation progresses. It is when his appearance and reality completely match and the coherence between the two is evident to all, at his coronation, that he achieves his true place and it is obvious that he has raised himself to a level where he is suitable to be Arwen's husband. Sauron, preoccupied with the sudden unwelcome appearance of Aragorn's particular reality, does not realize that, although Frodo and Sam appear to be petty spies, they are really the concealed Ring-bearers. Sauron the deceiver is deceived by his reliance on an accordance between their appearance and reality. True to Gandalf's prediction, Denethor eventually drops the appearance of being an indifferent father when it is no longer of any value to him, and Faramir is unaware of the change because it comes too late. It takes a similar crisis to make the Breelanders realize that they had

undervalued the Rangers: "'I don't think we've rightly understood till now what they did for us'" (III, p.272). Gandalf becomes the White, and therefore Head of the White Council, while the deposed and cast out Saruman, guilty of ofermod in aspiring to be "'Saruman of Many Colours'" (I, p.272),[3] wanders in "rags of grey or dirty white" (III, p.261). The sudden decay of his body after physical death shows the reality of moral death: "it seemed that long years of death were suddenly revealed in it, and it shrank, and the shrivelled face became rags of skin upon a hideous skull" (III, p.300). Death, the ultimate fulfilment of time, ends all deception. By coming to the "right" people - the agents of disorder - death becomes a force of order by removing disorderly people from the world. In such a case it is also an instance of an apparent evil - death, known both as the Doom of Men and the gift of Ilúvatar to Men - operating to a positive effect (since it is "given" to mortals and sent to certain potentially immortal beings by Eru's will, it can be seen, ultimately, as a force of order even when it claims a "good" character).

The discarding of a concealing appearance in the fullness of time which is part of the restoration of order process means that once more it can be correctly assumed that the "good" look good, and the "bad" look bad, and reactions can be made according to the reality reflected in the appearance. As Gandalf says, "'When the plot is ripe it remains no longer secret'" (II, p.190). Melkor becomes Lord of Darkness, and Sauron's appearance, after his body is destroyed in the drowning of Númenor, becomes "black and hideous" (III, p.317). Conversely, Lúthien (who inherits the "shining light" (S, p.165) in her face from Melian, which is the "light of Aman" (S, p.55) and therefore the Trees) drops her disguise as a vampire bat when confronting

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3. Cf. ll. 5-8 from Tolkien's poem on sub-creation, quoted OFS, p.49.

Carcharoth and becomes "radiant and terrible" (S, p.180). At moments when they demonstrate what they really are without any concealment, Galadriel (I, p.381) and Gandalf (II, pp.97-98) are also illuminated by "supernatural" light (their own connections with the Undying Lands are also implicit in these passages). Light as an indication of the reality is also present at times in Frodo (I, pp.151, 235, II, p.260), in Aragorn (III, p.246), Éowyn (III, p.117) and, after his death, Boromir (II, p.274). Connection with darkness, which can be used as a covering for deception and disorder, or light, as a revealer of truth, also serve to indicate a character's allegiance to Melkor or Eru as an authority.[4] However, this dichotomy is made more balanced at the end of the Third Age, which is one of the symbolic functions of Aragorn's black and white banner, and of his marriage with Arwen Evenstar (cf. III, p.251). The blurring of the black-white division which prevails (although not without some ambiguity in such characters as Sméagol or the Dwarves of The Hobbit) before the end of the Third Age is an alignment of appearance and reality since the world of the Fourth Age ("our" age) is one of grey rather than black and white.

An excessively beautiful appearance, even when it reveals the reality, can have fatal results: "It is said and sung that Lúthien wearing that necklace and that immortal jewel /the Nauglamír with the Silmaril/ was the vision of greatest beauty and glory that has ever been outside the realm of Valinor; and for a little while the Land of the Dead that Live became like a vision of the land of the Valar, and no place has been since so fair, so fruitful, or so full of light"

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4. Cf. also the role of sunlight in leading the Hobbits to Treebeard, the representative of order who acts as their guide on the next stage of their journey (II, pp.65-66), and the connection of sunlight throughout II, chapter 5, with Gandalf, another authority figure and guide, during his meeting with Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli.

(S, p.235). However, "the wise have said that the Silmaril hastened their /Beren and Lúthien's/ end; for the flame of the beauty of Lúthien as she wore it was too bright for mortal lands" (S, p.236). She is literally too beautiful (and, by implication, too good) to live in Middle-earth; she does not belong there in either a geographic or cosmic sense. The landscape changes to accommodate the appearance of Lúthien's reality, but since her residence there is inappropriate to her reality, this is only a temporary solution to the dichotomy, and she and Beren must leave the "mortal lands".

In a different context, the Ring's beauty is also fatal, in that the initial attraction, before it "discovers" in what area of power to offer domination, is in its beautiful appearance. Isildur refuses to destroy it because it is the only beautiful thing Sauron has made (in itself a suspicious circumstance). Déagol releases his fish (the practical value of food, an important subject to Hobbits) in favour of the Ring when he sees it shining, and Sméagol promptly murders his friend "'because the gold looked so bright and beautiful'" (I, p.62). Frodo finds that he cannot destroy it even after hearing its history: "Frodo thought how rich and beautiful was its colour, how perfect was its roundness. It was an admirable thing and altogether precious" (I, p.70). The true appearance of the Ring is revealed when it is placed in a situation which simulates its original environment, as Gandalf does when he puts it in the fire. The Ring is forced to drop its disguise and disclose its reality - be true to itself - by making visible the Black Speech verse, which is "foul and uncouth" (I, p.266) in appearance and obscene (according to Arda's standards) in meaning because it denies individuality and advocates the use of force. (The Ring's treacherous nature is obliquely indicated prior to Gandalf's

experiment by its changes in weight and size, and tendency to slip off a finger on which it had been tight.) Its power of granting invisibility, apparently so helpful, is an indication of its true purpose, in that prolonged use devours the wearer's identity and makes him a non-person suitable to a non-appearance. A useful tool only to Sauron because it is part of him, it transforms its wearer into a tool and "part" of Sauron.

A person or a thing must be truly seen as him/her/itself for the beholder to offer a wholly appropriate response. Éowyn does not really love Aragorn as she believes she does, because in him "'she loves only a shadow and a thought: a hope of glory and great deeds, and lands far from the fields of Rohan'" (II, p.143). Because she does not see him as himself but as the exotic stranger whom she wishes to see for her own purposes, she does not love him as she loves Éomer, whom she knows. Similarly, until an object or an experience of everyday life is appreciated as itself, as unique and different in some way from all apparently or superficially similar objects or experiences, it cannot be fully appreciated.

In The Lord of the Rings, for example, an experience as common as a meal of bread and fruit is shown to be unique, both like and unlike other good simple meals:

> Pippin afterwards recalled little of either food or drink, for his mind was filled with the light upon the elf-faces, and the sound of voices so various and so beautiful that he felt in a waking dream. But he remembered that there was bread, surpassing the savour of a fair white loaf to one who is starving; and fruits sweet as wildberries and richer than the tended fruits of gardens; he drained a cup that was filled with a fragrant draught, cool as a clear fountain, golden as a summer afternoon.
>
> (I, p.91)

Pippin recalls the experience in the most archetypal terms which communicate through generality and common experience, yet leave scope for individual association with a particular sensation or event. The homely immediacy of bread, fruit and drink (particularly important to a hungry Hobbit) and the strange "otherness" of the Elves (particularly noticeable to a thoughtless, careless, provincial Hobbit) complement each other to create an experience at once familiar and yet strange. The completeness of the event is emphasized by the contrast between the fullness of the "fair white loaf" and "starving"; the wildberries and the domesticated garden fruits; the transparent cool fountain and the implied density and warmth of a golden summer afternoon.

Similarly Frodo, on awakening in Rivendell, re-appreciates simple pleasures: "he lay a little while longer looking at patches of sunlight on the wall, and listening to the sound of a waterfall" (I, p.231). In Lothlórien he rediscovers trees. He enters into what is, for him, a world of myth or fairy-story: "it seemed to him that he had stepped over a bridge of time into a corner of the Elder Days, and was now walking in a world that was no more. In Rivendell there was memory of ancient things; in Lórien the ancient things still lived on in the waking world" (I, p.364). As Lewis puts it, "By dipping them /every day objects/ in myth we see them more clearly."[5]

The invitation to move towards an establishment of order within the individual self through an awareness that something as apparently familiar as the earth itself is wonder-full is evident in Aragorn's encouragement of the Rohirrim to make re-evaluations:

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5. Clive Staples Lewis, "The Dethronement of Power", Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), p.16. The article was originally printed in Time and Tide, 36 (22 October 1955), 1573-74.

> "Halflings!" laughed the Rider that stood beside Éomer. "Halflings! But they are only a little people in old songs and children's tales out of the North. Do we walk in legends or on the green earth in the daylight?"
>
> "A man may do both," said Aragorn. "For not we but those who come after will make the legends of our time. The green earth, say you? That is a mighty matter of legend, though you tread it under the light of day!"
>
> (II, p.37)

In this situation it is only by enabling the Riders to see more clearly and perceive a world in which "Halflings" can be a reality that Aragorn and the Riders themselves can work constructively to establish world order. The importance of perceiving a thing as itself is expressed by Mircea Eliade: "Every significant cosmic object has a 'history'. This is as much as to say that it can 'speak' to man. Because it 'speaks' of itself - above all of its 'origin', the primordial event in consequence of which it came into being - the object becomes real and significant. It is no longer something 'unknown', that is, an opaque object, inapprehensible, meaningless, and in the last analysis, 'unreal'. It shares the same 'World' as man."[6]

The unthinking opaqueness of familiarity can be dispersed by a recovered vision of a person who is suddenly seen in unfamiliar circumstances which lend or impart some aspect of his strangeness to the person being observed, whose "otherness" or uniqueness is thus revealed. For example, Gandalf is neither Man nor Elf but has characteristics of both. The Shire-folk perceive him as an "old man" who "wore a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, and a silver scarf. He had a long white beard and bushy eyebrows that stuck out beyond the brim of his hat" (I, p.33; this is almost exactly the same

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6. Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964), p.142.

description as found in H, pp.3-4). Away from the isolated Shire in the cosmopolitan house of Elrond Frodo "recovers" Gandalf by expanding his previous limited view of him. He begins to understand the real power behind Gandalf's unimpressive exterior when the Wizard is juxtaposed with the high, mysterious Elves:

> as they sat upon his /Ēlrond's/ right hand and his left, Glorfindel, and even Gandalf, whom he thought he knew so well, were revealed as lords of dignity and power.
>
> Gandalf was shorter in stature than the other two, but his long white hair, his sweeping silver beard, and his broad shoulders, made him look like some wise king of ancient legend. In his aged face under great snowy brows his dark eyes were set like coals that could leap suddenly into fire.
>
> (I, p.239)

Frodo now realizes the truth of Aragorn's comment "'Gandalf is greater than you Shire-folk know - as a rule you can only see his jokes and toys'" (I, p.185). As well as regarding Gandalf as the friend and "private" person he had known in the Shire, Frodo can now perceive him as a strong force and "public" person in the larger world.

As Frodo gains another view of Gandalf in Rivendell, so he re-sees Aragorn in Lothlórien. At their first meeting at the public house in Bree, Aragorn seems like an ordinary if suspicious human, surrounded by other ordinary humans. Frodo's opinion changes gradually during the journey to Rivendell, and he tells Gandalf "'he is dear to me, though he is strange, and grim at times. In fact, he reminds me often of you. I didn't know that any of the Big People were like that, I thought, well, that they were just big, and rather stupid: kind and stupid like Butterbur; or stupid and wicked like Bill Ferny'" (I, pp.232-33). Despite his insight that Aragorn is more like Gandalf

than the other Men of his experience, however, Frodo still considers him "'only a Ranger'" (I, p.233), and Gandalf must enlighten him about the true nature of Rangers (Frodo cannot fully realize the aptness of the Aragorn-Gandalf comparison because his view of the Wizard is still limited; cf. also the discussion of the two between Merry and Pippin in Minas Tirith, in which the latter opines "'I think they must be related'" (III, p.146)).

At the Council of Elrond, gathered to consider the fate of the world, Frodo becomes fully aware of Aragorn's true status in the "outside" world with the revelation that he is the heir of Isildur. It is in Lórien, a guarded land which is removed from the outside world as is the Shire, that Frodo expands his idea of Aragorn by discovering him as a "private" person with individual, personal concerns:

> At the hill's foot Frodo found Aragorn, standing still and silent as a tree; but in his hand was a small golden bloom of elanor, and a light was in his eyes. He was wrapped in some fair memory: and as Frodo looked at him he knew that he beheld things as they once had been in this same place. For the grim years were removed from the face of Aragorn, and he seemed clothed in white, a young lord tall and fair; and he spoke words in the Elvish tongue to one whom Frodo could not see. Arwen vanimelda, namarië! he said, and he drew a breath, and returning out of his thought he looked at Frodo and smiled.
>
> (I, pp.366-67)

Frodo recognizes Gandalf's "otherness" from the person he has known in the Shire by connecting him with a human (Aragorn) and Elves (Elrond and Glorfindel). Similarly he recognizes Aragorn's "otherness" from the homely Hobbit-like Men of Bree (who are described in I, p.161, as "brown-haired, broad and rather short, cheerful and independent") by connecting him with Gandalf in Rivendell, and with Elves in Lórien. Frodo does not realize the significance of Aragorn's words or remember

seeing him with Arwen because his vision of Aragorn in Rivendell was of the "public" rather than the "private" person.

The relation between appearance and reality is a significant method of communicating who and what a character truly is and what his role is or probably will be in the order-disorder struggle. In the "good" characters' efforts to breach the appearance-reality dichotomy and create order, the disruption of which is indicated by the existence of the dichotomy, the value of self-knowledge and of knowledge of others as separate from self means that the importance of communication is emphasized. How people communicate - what they say and how they say it - reveals the truth about the speakers through their self-opinions and their opinions of others.

"In the last analysis, the World reveals itself as language":[7] a comment about mythology which is particularly relevant to Tolkien's myth. Language is an agent of order because it defines and places things: it is used to convey truth. To use it deviously or with a view to distortion of what is fact - reality - is an even more reliable indicator of a person's allegiance to Melkor than is appearance. Interpretation of appearance can be mistaken due to ignorance or insularity, but for one character to discover that another has deliberately told a lie leaves no room for doubt about the deceiver's intentions. No "good" character, whether in disguise or not, distorts language for any purpose (cf. Faramir's rebuke to Frodo, III, p.272: "'I would not snare even an orc with a falsehood'"), although he may think it judicious to limit the amount of truth he reveals, especially if he is uncertain of another person's "reality", as when Aragorn tells the Hobbits "'I did not intend to tell you all about myself at

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7. Eliade, Myth and Reality, p.141.

once. I had to study you first, and make sure of you'" (I, p.183).

Names are at the centre of a language because they define the world which the language describes and in which it operates. Therefore "real" names are significant in that they "'tell you the story of the things that they belong to'" (II, p.68). Mircea Eliade states that, because of language, "The World is no longer an opaque mass of objects arbitrarily thrown together, it is a living Cosmos, articulated and meaningful."[8] A proper respect for one's own name implies justified self-esteem, and is an assertion of identity and a claim for consideration and respect from others, as seen in Gandalf's indignant retort to Bilbo: "'I am Gandalf, and Gandalf means me! To think that I should have lived to be good-morninged by Belladonna Took's son, as if I was selling buttons at the door!'" (H, p.5). Equally, to give a name to another person is a significant action in that it is commitment of self (whether in friendship or hostility) to the other party: the one being named is important enough to merit attention. Thus, the given name provides information about the named, the namer and relationship between them, and often between two larger social groups which they represent (two parallel examples are the names Wingfoot and Láthspell or Ill-news given Aragorn and Gandalf by Éomer and Wormtongue respectively). To name an inanimate object is to give emphasis to its specialness and role in the world, and to associate it with an owner. This is the point made by Melkor when he claims the world: "'This shall be my own kingdom; and I name it unto myself!'" (S, p.21), and when he claims the Silmarils. More agreeable is the immediate result of Bilbo's first fight:

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8. Eliade, Myth and Reality, p.141.

> The spider lay dead beside him, and his sword-blade was stained black. Somehow the killing of the giant spider, all alone by himself in the dark without the help of the wizard or the dwarves or of anyone else, made a great difference to Mr. Baggins. He felt a different person, and was much fiercer and bolder in spite of an empty stomach, as he wiped his sword on the grass and put it back into its sheath.
>
> "I will give you a name," he said to it, "and I shall call you Sting."
>
> (H, p.144)

To name is to see "'things as they are' ... as things apart from ourselves" (OFS, p.52). Moreover, the multiplicity of a character's names points to a many-faceted truth. For example, as one critic notes, "The totality of Aragorn cannot be apprehended until we have encountered the full succession of his names; yet the unique vision which each of them imparts evokes separate images of the same person."[9]

Traditionally, names have power because of who or what they mean. Therefore Fëanor's oath is the most powerful he can make because he swears by Ilúvatar, Manwë, Varda and the holy mountain Taniquetil, and Elbereth's name is a more powerful weapon against the Nazgûl than Frodo's sword. When Pippin greets Frodo as "Lord of the Ring", Gandalf reproves him: "'Evil things do not come into this valley; but all the same we should not name them'" (I, p.238; Gandalf himself names the Ring - an evil thing - by reciting its verse in the Black Speech the next day in order to reinforce his point). Just outside Mordor, Frodo declares their destination to Gollum, who shows his dismay by "covering his ears with his hands, as if such frankness, and the open speaking of the names, hurt him'" (II, p.222). Because Sauron "'does /not/ use his right name, nor permit it to be spelt or spoken'" (II, p.18), he is

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9. Anthony J. Ugolnik, "'Wordhord Onleac': The Medieval Sources of J.R.R. Tolkien's Linguistic Aesthetic", Mosaic, 10, No.2 (1976-77), p.19.

known by inanimate attributive names such as the Great Eye or the Black Hand, or denials of identity such as the Nameless Enemy or the Unnamed. This policy both demonstrates his lack of concern with individuality and is practical in that to know a character's name is to gain power over him or her since the name conveys knowledge of what the person is (cf. during the Music, "in the understanding of their brethren they grew but slowly. Yet ever as they listened they came to deeper understanding, and increased in unison and harmony" (S, p.15)). This is the reason that characters like Túrin and Aragorn prefer aliases, the Dwarves keep their true names secret, and Treebeard cautions the Hobbits "'You'll be letting out your own right names if you're not careful'" (II, p.68). One of the sources of Bilbo's security on his expedition is that no one knows who or what he is. He first realizes this when he starts to tell the Trolls he is a burglar, guesses that this will make them even more suspicious (he has just been caught trying to steal a purse) and changes the description to "hobbit". He also declines to tell Smaug his name although he is unfortunately not as reticent with Gollum; Tolkien comments with regard to the former that Bilbo was "wise" (H, p.205), while Gandalf thinks that he behaved "'very foolishly'" (I, p.66) in his encounter with Gollum. It is the custom of Rohan (and Fangorn) that "'the stranger should declare himself first'" (II, p.35), because he is the one who has intruded and placed himself in his host's power. Lúthien's declaration of her identity to Morgoth is apparently rash (especially since she has already had problems with Celegorm and Curufin through self-revelation), but in this case victory depends on a combination of boldness and stealth, and to conceal her name - the reality - is pointless since Morgoth has taken her disguise. Discussing The Silmarillion, Naomi Mitchison

states: "Names are the media, is the message.... Names are history, history is language, all interlocks."[10] Thus Peter Conrad's[11] scorn for The Silmarillion on the basis of Tolkien's concentration on names and, more generally, linguistics, indicates that he has missed the point on the use of names and of the different languages and their significance.

The sound of a language is as indicative of identity as a name, and has the same associative power: the Elven tongues are beautiful, Rohirric stirring, and the sound of the Black Speech inspires fear and loathing. The content and meaning of a language are related in a logical and orderly manner to its structure and sound. Connected with the associative power of language is its creative value. To compose a song or verse about another person or an object honours and distinguishes its subject. The allure of being mentioned in praise-full songs and tales promotes heroism, generosity and courage. Language also serves as an agent of history, with its accumulated knowledge and lessons. Robley Evans comments: "the imagination is a weapon... and if rightly used, can counter and manipulate the past. The love of life which the imagination fosters; the respect for other living things, an imaginative act; the belief in ultimate good and the will to realize it - these are weapons in the inevitable conflict. Perhaps the most important... is to make words, a song, a Secondary World giving

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10. Naomi Mitchison, "Maps of Middle Earth", Books and Bookmen, October 1977, p.28. MacDonald (in At the Back of the North Wind, The Princess and the Goblin and The Princess and Curdie) and Eddison (in the Zimiamvian trilogy) argue, unlike Tolkien, that the name is irrelevant, and the substance of a person or thing only should be considered.

11. Peter Conrad, "The Babbit", New Statesman, 94 (23 September 1977), 408-09. Since names are also powerful invocations in Narnia, Nikabrik also misses the point when he rebukes his fellow counsellors "'Don't all take fright at a name as if you were children'" after he speaks of the White Witch. See Clive Staples Lewis, Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1951), p.148.

shape to the Primary World and the events in it, making time into an agent for freedom... The past lives, and it is the task of the imagination to order it constructively."[12] The creative, constructive use of language in the creation of a story or song which expresses a truth serves the cause of order in that it communicates facts, ideas and concepts from the composer and the environment or situation on which he draws to the listener: it makes sense out of an event or action. It is when Gandalf draws his attention to old tales that Théoden can comprehend what the Ents are. It is through a consideration of stories that Sam, like Digory who "knew that all the Narnians had heard those words and the story of them would be handed down from father to son in that new world for hundreds of years and perhaps forever",[13] comes to understand more fully his share in the development of history (II, pp. 320-22) and perceive the continuing struggle towards order waged by Middle-earth's inhabitants. The task which Frodo lays on Sam is to ensure that a knowledge of the past is maintained through the tales of the Red Book. The role of the story-teller, an artistic hero, is as important as the role of the monster-slayer, the conventional hero (often, of course, a character is both, or develops from one to the other). The sub-creator makes an example of order in his sub-creation, which usually deals with a monster-slayer, just as the conventional hero promotes world order by slaying the monster. Contemporary history is made into myth for the benefit of future monster-slayers, who will be inspired both by old versions of stories about conventional heroes and by the stories made by their own contemporaries, who will also draw on the past for inspiration (cf. Aragorn's statement "'not we but those

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12. Evans, p.93.

13. Clive Staples Lewis, The Magician's Nephew (1955; rpt. The Bodley Head, 1960), p.164.

who come after will make the legends of our time'" (II, p.37)). Although even Gollum has a song (II, p.227), was at one time fond of old tales (II, pp.235,249,322), and demonstrates his ability to use language creatively through riddles, Melkor, Sauron, Saruman and the Orcs do not: as Evans points out, "they have no wish to know or to love other living things, to transcend themselves, to know the past."[14] Even the structure of the Black Speech, in its word and sound formation and the diversity of dialects, means that, as Anthony Ugolnik says, "communal history and communal song are impossible."[15]

Courtesy, custom and ritualistic celebrations are related to language and valued for the same reasons of communication of truth and connection with other people. An ordered society in which everyone has a place and is esteemed as an individual has a governing code of rules and traditions which reveals, through the words and actions of each member of the society, who and what the individual is and where he stands in relation to others. Moreover, the orderly structure of the society permits everyone to express an opinion at the proper time and place, and people are encouraged to fulfil their potential within their proper roles. For example, Théoden's soldiers salute their superiors and are invited by the king to tell him their choice of regent while he is away, while Erkenbrand is entrusted with the leadership and defence of the Westfold. In contrast, the Orcs who capture Merry and Pippin make no such gesture of respect to their leaders and have no respect for each other in any regard, while the Orc scout, upon sighting a scout of Rohan, does not act on his own responsibility to try and eliminate the enemy. When confronted with a person whose

14. Evans, p.159.

15. Ugolnik, p.28.

appearance is surprising or dubious or a speech which could be either true or false, characters who are uncertain of the reality can use the attitudes communicated by manner as a reasonably reliable index for judgment. This is the approach taken by Théoden, Faramir, Beregond and Denethor when confronted with the Hobbits (II, pp.163, 267 and III, pp.28 and 34; the Hobbits use the same scale to make similar evaluations, II, pp.164, 280 and III, p.34); and by Legolas when assessing the Rangers (III, p.49). Courtesy is an indication of "goodness" since it implies self-respect and a respect for others, in that one can afford to be polite because of sufficient self-security not to be aggressive towards others. Beorn is the only "good" character described as being "never very polite" (H, p.111), a tendency perhaps excusable by the fact that he is a hermit. Customs, traditions and ceremonies are valued as being representative of individuality and order. As C.B. Cox puts it, "The dignity of human relationships is fostered by the many ceremonies, the love of genealogies, which link together past and present, the gifts at parting, the gracious manners, the songs... which celebrate each stage of the action."[16]

At the same time, these functions of self- and mutual respect are open to misuse. When a community is determined on isolation and non-involvement - as is Doriath, or at least Thingol, in the Wars of Beleriand, and Rohan, or at least Théoden under Wormtongue's tutelage, in the War of the Ring - language can be used as a divisive force between the community and the outside world. Thingol's wish to dissociate himself from the Teleri slayers and their cause leads him to forbid Quenya, while Théoden commands that only those who know Rohirric be allowed into Edoras. The dangerous side of the temptation

16. C.B. Cox, "The World of the Hobbits", Spectator, 30 December 1966, p.844.

to seek immortality in song and story is commented on in "Ofermod": "This element of pride, in the form of the desire for honour and glory, in life and death, tends to grow, to become a chief motive, driving a man beyond the bleak heroic necessity to excess - to chivalry. 'Excess' certainly... when it not only goes beyond need and duty, but interferes with it" (p.20). This is one of the motives behind the actions of Fëanor and the Rohirrim. It is not absent even from the thoughts of Frodo and Sam, although at no time does the consideration influence their actions. Tolkien is careful to demonstrate both the positive and the negative aspects of such a system of values. Finally, as an agent of history and knowledge, language in the form of songs and tales is subject to indifference - displayed by Eärnur, Boromir and most Hobbits - and distortion, the effects of which are seen in the Elves' fear of Oromë, and Men's fear of Elves at the end of the Third Age. In a similar context, when the Númenoreans are corrupted rites and rituals become distorted and reflect the disorder of the community. The negative aspect of loss of courtesy is seen in Thingol's fatal rudeness to Beren and the Dwarves, Saeros' fatal insult of Túrin, and the pettiness and injustice of Túrin's insults to Brandir immediately before he murders him. They are all distortions or misleading manipulations of communicative tools, which lead to distrust, isolation and division (and therefore weakness), and poverty through lack of exposure to other cultures. One of the purposes of those who strive to restore order is to learn about other peoples, so that when they return to their homes, they can communicate to their countrymen the truth about the "outside" world, having become aware of the truths of other "interiors", and revealed the truths of their native "interiors" to the aliens. Those who become leaders, such as Elendil, his sons,

Gandalf and Aragorn, are able to assume the role because they know about the "outside" or connecting areas between the "interiors" of isolated communities, as well as the communities themselves, and can weld the parts into an ordered whole which contains a variety of individual identities.[17] An awareness of others and the capacity to communicate with them are vital factors in the conflict between order and chaos.

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17. See Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, 2nd ed., Bollingen Series XVII (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) for an extended discussion on this subject.

Chapter VII - The Relationship between Order and History

When disorder has been introduced in opposition to order, it is impossible to remain neutral, as is discovered by the Edain of the First Age, Thingol, the Rohirrim and the Hobbits. When a crisis is caused by the rebellion of some forceful personality against Eru's authority, the rest of the world's inhabitants become provoked into a choice of commitments. In a crisis the reality of a person is revealed. Evans states: "The concept of the 'will' ... is the assertion of the true self, a faithful statement of oneself in a world threatened by an external power who appears all too persuasive. Will means helping others, perhaps commanding them to achieve their true nature and being in the world; but also means control of the fear, the passion, the possibilities for evil which break down the self and open it to invasion by another will. Basically, Tolkien is arguing for a... vision of man as /ān/ ... individual <u>within</u> a unified society whose structure gives a place and a sense of worth to all its members."[1]

The exact nature and extent of an individual's role in the order-chaos struggle is not always clear, and people are not infrequently accused of "meddling". In some cases their own knowledge and apprehensions prompt them to caution. Gildor initially refuses to tell Frodo about the Nazgûl: "'I think it is not for me to say more - lest terror should keep you from your road'". Having made it clear that he does not wish to meddle in Frodo's "business" because he does not know exactly what the "business" is and what their respective roles are, he adds the rider "'it is said: Do not meddle in the affairs of

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1. Robley Evans, <u>J.R.R. Tolkien</u> (New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1972), p.141.

wizards, for they are subtle and quick to anger'" (a piece of advice unsuccessfully offered by Merry to Pippin just before the latter "meddles" with the palantír). Gildor insists on leaving the next move to Frodo, but, pressed by the Hobbit, finally states his opinion, although he also comments "'Elves seldom give unguarded advice, for advice is a dangerous gift, even from the wise to the wise, and all courses may run ill.... I fear to say too much'" (I, pp.93-94). Those who seem incapable of coming to the sensible conclusion that it is best to mind one's own "business" and stay in what appears to be the proper place, are given helpful warnings, as when the Gaffer tells Sam "'Don't go getting mixed up in the business of your betters, or you'll land in trouble too big for you'" (I, p.32). Grishnákh, under less congenial circumstances, similarly offers it as his opinion that "'Little people should not meddle in affairs that are too big for them'" (II, p.58).

The last two counsellors quoted do not realize that it is only by "meddling" - becoming involved with the problems of others and trying to restore order, instead of attempting to remain isolated and neutral - that it is possible to assert one's individuality both locally and historically, and fulfil one's potential. It is only by leaving their isolated places of exile and outlawry and becoming involved with others that people such as Beren, Túrin, Tuor and Aragorn can play their roles in history and achieve their correct places. The five Hobbits, Gimli and Legolas must leave their isolated and insulated homes in order to participate in world events and gain the experience necessary for them to assume their rightful roles in their native countries on their return. It is the quest hero's task to leave the place he originally holds or seems to hold in his community and the

responsibilities attached to that place so that he can undertake the quest and work against chaos. It is only by leaving the community - the basis for his previous identity - that he can fulfil his true potential and assume his true role by becoming who he really is and making his appearance and reality coincide. As Campbell puts it, "The familiar life horizon has been outgrown; the old concepts, ideals and emotional patterns no longer fit; the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand."[2] Legolas and Gimli become lords of new settlements. Merry and Pippin, having been "pawns" in the outside world (cf. III, pp.32 and 39), are "kings" in the Shire, while Sam becomes the Mayor"'and the most famous gardener in history'" (III, p. 309). For Bilbo and Frodo the situation is not quite as simple. Bilbo finds, on his much longed-for return, that others think that he has been out of place (an opinion shared by Bilbo for most of the journey). Because of this, he has been believed dead, and he remains so as far as the neighbours are concerned: the Sackville-Bagginses "never admitted that the returned Baggins was genuine", and he is "cut dead" by others, who feel he is "no longer quite respectable" (H, p.277). Frodo suffers a similar rejection on his return. By moving beyond the Shire in experience and attitude, they lose their places there. However, both act as guardians and agents of order by "writing" The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings, and presumably The Silmarillion to preserve the history of the struggle against disorder, and by training their heirs (Frodo and Sam): "'you will read things out of the Red Book, and keep alive the memory of the age that is gone, so that people will remember the Great Danger and so love their beloved land all the more'" (III, p.309). The role of educators passes to

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2. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, 2nd ed., Bollingen Series XVII (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p.51.

Sam, Merry and Pippin on the departure of the two older Hobbits, and Tolkien uses The Adventures of Tom Bombadil, the "Thain's Book", the "Red Book of Westmarch", and Merry's scholarly productions to indicate that they fulfil their trust.

During the Third Age, in keeping with his mission, Gandalf's consistent policy, seconded by Elrond, Aragorn and, eventually, the other leaders concerned, is to encourage the thinking peoples of Middle-earth to unite against Sauron and attempt to restore order while at the same time maintaining their own unique identities and respecting the individuality of others. The members of the Company are all ambassadors for their own races and/or communities, and by travelling through places such as Khazad-dûm and Lórien they become aware of other peoples and communities: "slowly it becomes clear that these worlds simply are, rising and falling in the flux of history, following their natural course. The fellowship is of supreme importance at one moment in history, for if Sauron gains the Ring the whole process of history would be transformed. The Ring can find and bind - that is evil because it is unnatural, because life is being oneself and following one's own nature; war, then, is the struggle to be alive, unbound."[3] The agelong Elf-Dwarf feud is so far resolved that Legolas and Gimli each agree to visit places which are "homelike" to the other, and Gimli eventually goes to Elvenhome permanently. Other cross-influences also appear: Merry and Pippin become Knights of Rohan and Gondor; Éowyn marries a Gondorean; Aragorn marries an Elf; Gimli establishes a community of Dwarves under the over-lordship of Éomer; Legolas founds an elvish settlement in Ithilien under Faramir's rule; Bilbo, Frodo and Sam also leave Middle-earth for Valinor.

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3. Roger Sale, "Tolkien and Frodo Baggins", in Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), p.258.

It is the business of the hero to ensure that such connections take place, both through his own relationships and through the education which he transmits to the members of the community to which he returns or over which he becomes the ruler. Part of the order-establishing process is a widespread recognition of all individual parts of the whole. The basic pattern of myth is outlined by Campbell: "A hero ventures from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man."[4] Beren and Lúthien bring back a Silmaril from the land of death, marry and initiate a new dynasty while ensuring the downfall of the old order. Gwindor learns of Morgoth during his captivity but his message to the other Elves of Nargothrond is disregarded. Amandil sets out on a mission to try to save the Faithful by acting as their messenger, and (probably) as a result of this mission the Faithful are able to return to Middle-earth with the remnants of the Númenorean culture. Eärendil returns with the Silmaril as Gil-Estel, the Star of Hope. Gandalf comes back from death as Gandalf the White. Aragorn returns from the dead (as it seems) to become the triumphant king. Éomer, Gimli and Legolas return to their homes with knowledge and experience never before achieved by their peoples. Bilbo is "presumed dead" by his relatives and neighbours but returns to the Shire with tales, songs and historical knowledge which are appreciated by his younger relatives and Sam if by no one else. The other four Hobbits, who are also considered dead, return and are able to restore order: as Gandalf

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4. Campbell, p.30.

tells them, "'that is what you have been trained for'" (III, p.275). As leaders and lore-masters they are able to benefit the Shire in peace and prosperity as well as in war and deprivation. All these characters grow in metaphorical (and occasionally physical) stature as a result of their exposure to a wider geographical area with its various inhabitants and their special provinces of knowledge, and develop deeper historical awareness through an exchange such as that proposed by Pippin to Bergil: "'you might show me round the City for awhile and cheer my loneliness. I can tell you some tales of far countries in return'" (III, p.42).

It is from a knowledge of history that those characters who are considered wise gain the insight on which they base their decisions and actions. The older characters are looked to for wisdom because "memory is regarded as the pre-eminent form of knowledge. He who can recollect possesses an even more precious magico-religious power than he who knows the origin of things."[5] The past is inextricably related to the present, according to Evans: "The past never dies; it keeps coming forward into the present, and demanding response, decision, courage, perhaps death."[6] Songs and stories from history are used to learn of the past: they induce an understanding of it, and that knowledge is used to order the present and shape events accordingly. Evans goes on to say: "Living beings in each age must make choices, and... the nature of these choices - or, perhaps, this Choice - is always the same, since it demands the exercise of judgment which is a test of what is worth

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5. Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964), p.90.

6. Evans, p.52.

preserving in life."[7] That which is worth preserving - the wisdom, learning and experience gained by the old order - must be respected by the rising order, absorbed and used when dealing with the problems encountered by the present generation, particularly since the problems are essentially the same as the ones encountered by the old order. Positive accomplishments must be acknowledged: "Though great evil had come after, even the followers of Elendil remembered with pride the coming of the great host of Ar-Pharazôn out of the deeps of the Sea; and on the highest hill of the headland above the Haven they had set a great white pillar as a monument [of Sauron's defeat by the Númenoreans]" (III, pp.327-28).

Since all things come to fulfilment in Eru's time, it is those characters who are most conscious of Eru's will towards order who advocate the necessity of patience and the advisability of not being "too hasty". In the First Age, Melkor and Aulë are both too impatient to wait upon Ilúvatar's designs and attempt to fulfil them prematurely. Aulë learns from his mistake and develops patience. When Thingol's designs in the quest of the Silmaril go awry he turns to Melian for advice, "but now she withheld her counsel from him, saying that the doom that he had devised must work to its appointed end, and that he must wait now upon time" (S, p.183). The Fifth Battle is disastrously lost because "Maedhros made trial of his strength too soon, ere his plans were full-wrought" (S, p.189), and because Gwindor strikes too soon. Gwindor learns caution and prudence, but his experience is ignored in favour of Túrin's impatience. In the Second Age the Númenoreans are also unwilling to wait upon time to reveal the ultimate

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7. Evans, pp.95-96.

fate which Eru assigns them, and try to take matters into their own hands. Their descendants in Middle-earth, generally speaking, take the lesson and strive to endure.

By the end of the Third Age, the wise - those characters who have a knowledge of themselves and of their role in history and can profitably apply it - have realized the necessity of seizing their opportunities and yet maintaining their patience until the opportunity occurs, not trying to seize one which, in fact, does not exist. Glorfindel warns Ëarnur that the Witch-king is destined not to fall for many years, but Ëarnur disregards him in his eagerness to be avenged for his disgrace. When Legolas is drawn to the Ents' wood, Gandalf stops him: "'Now is not your time'" (II, p.154). Gimli impatiently wishes Legolas to see the Aglarond caves while Théoden's army is still at Helm's Deep, but Legolas responds "'Do not spoil the wonder with haste!'" (III, p.49). Treebeard, whose motto is "'Do not be hasty'" (II, p.67), yet recognizes "'I have been idle. I have let things slip. It must stop!'" (II, p. 77). At the same time he is convinced that Saruman's impatience led to his downfall, and in that Saruman began deviating from an allegiance to order by wishing to impose it instead of taking the longer course of evolving it, Treebeard is correct. Gandalf's ceremonial return of the palantír to Aragorn epitomizes both cautious patience and the recognition that the opportunity to restore order must be utilized when it appears:

> "There is one who may claim it by right. For this assuredly is the palantír of Orthanc from the treasury of Elendil, set here by the Kings of Gondor. Now my hour draws near. I will take it."
>
> Gandalf looked at Aragorn, and then, to the surprise of the others, he lifted the covered Stone, and bowed as he presented it.

> "Receive it, lord!" he said: "in earnest of other things that shall be given back. But if I may counsel you in the use of your own, do not use it - yet! Be wary!"
>
> "When have I been hasty or unwary, who have waited and prepared for so many long years?" said Aragorn.
>
> "Never yet. Do not then stumble at the end of the road," answered Gandalf.
>
> (II, pp.199-200)

Again, just as Tolkien uses the Hobbits as mediators to demonstrate the "recovery" of a clear vision and to mediate between his readers and "other" beings, he uses them to emphasize the importance of matching appropriate times with appropriate actions, therefore in effect showing the operation of patience in the order-restoring process in the secondary world so that it can be applied to everyday living in the primary world. The Hobbits, careless, undisciplined and accustomed to peaceful monotony, are very little conscious of time and have almost no sense of the appropriate behaviour outside their snug little world. This is evident even in The Hobbit, where, for example, Bilbo is told by the irritated Bombur, after they are released from the Trolls' sacks, "'Silly time to go practising pinching and pocket-picking... when what we wanted was fire and food!'" (H, p.39). When Sam interrupts Faramir's interrogation of Frodo, he is firmly put into his place. Merry and Pippin are continually being admonished on the subject, as when Théoden is warned by Gandalf not to get involved in a discussion on tobacco with them in Isengard; later on the same day the Wizard recommends that Merry find out about Rohan's geography and the events of the past few days, but adds "'But not just now, and not from me: I have too many pressing things to think about'" (II, p.194). Their tendency to get out of place and time becomes particularly noticeable in Minas Tirith, which is formal, mannered and in the middle of war

preparations. Pippin has no experience of these conditions and is constantly forgetting the proper conduct or revealing his ignorance of the appropriate behaviour to coincide with the occasion (see, for example, III, pp.21, 25-26, 33-34, 84, 92, 139).

Acknowledging the omnipotent and omniscient authority of the deity and knowing that all events work towards the fulfilment of his designs in his time, the "good" mortal characters accept even the most apparently senseless and chaotic of all events: death. For Men, Hobbits, Dwarves and Ents, the replacement of the old generation by the next is, when the individuals concerned accept their inevitable deaths, perceived as the will of Eru. For example, "Beor at the last had relinquished his life willingly and passed in peace" (S, p.149). When Frodo and his companions return to Rivendell, they find Bilbo looking "very old, but peaceful, and sleepy" (III, p.254). He greets them cheerfully: "'Do you know, I shall be one hundred and twenty-nine? And in one year more, if I am spared, I shall equal the Old Took. I should like to beat him; but we shall see'" (III, p.264).

The passage of the older generation in favour of their children is not natural to the Elves (or, of course, the Ainur). With the possibility of living forever, they are naturally static in terms of the power structure of their familial and social groups. Before the revolt of the Noldor they live peacefully in Aman or in Middle-earth under unquestioned authority figures (Ingwe, Finwe, Olwe), and their family groups apparently do not increase at a great rate. Before Finwe's death Feanor is anxious with regard to his place and privileges as eldest and favourite son, but this does not involve a concern with political and social power as potential head of the family and Noldorin group. He is interested only in Fingolfin's "usurpation" of his place

as first in their father's affections and the privileges which go with his position as eldest. Because Finwë is out of place in Formenos and is thus killed, the Noldor must initiate a system of power transference, a system which is connected with the death which is not natural to them and which they have brought on themselves.

The Númenoreans are in a different position. They are, by their racial nature, "Mortal Men doomed to die" (I, II and III, frontispieces). Like the Noldor, they also refuse to accord with Eru's order, but whereas the Noldor's rejection involves an acceptance of (to them) unnatural death, the Númenoreans try to refuse death and embrace an unnatural (to them) immortality.

The truly heroic mortals, such as Hador, Huor, Galdor and others, are all willing to die in the effort to bring a new order and a new world into being. Their corrupt descendants are emphatically unwilling to do so, and try to deny the next generation the opportunity to make a new world. Tar-Atanamir refuses to listen to the warnings offered by the messengers of the Valar: "And Atanamir lived to a great age, clinging to his life beyond the end of all joy; and he was the first of the Númenoreans to do this, refusing to depart until he was witless and unmanned, and denying to his son the kingship at the height of his days" (S, p.266). By denying death, he and his followers deny their racial nature and lose their personal natures. They refuse to "live" in their children and in whatever afterlife is assigned them by Eru. The Númenoreans lose their (pagan) resignation to fate, and their (Christian) faith and optimism that the fate will be a positive one. By trying to assume an unnatural immortality, they receive unnatural death: "Death did not depart from the land, rather it came sooner and more often, and in many dreadful guises" (S, p.274). Having lost their faith, they become "heathen". Eventually they are despairingly

resigned to the inevitability of death but too proud to wait on Eru's will. Since they refuse to follow Eru's will by accepting what he sends as "right" for them and are yet unable to contest death they try to take their fate into their own hands (an assumption of Eru's role) and fix the time of their own deaths. Not acknowledging Eru's omnipotence, they do not acknowledge that it is their pre-destined fate to commit suicide at the times they do. The Númenorean desire for immortality is finally achieved by the Nazgûl, who thus "'bear the ever-mounting burden of years'" (S, p.265) which is one of the less desirable aspects of immortality and which they are not meant, by nature, to bear: "They had, as it seemed, unending life, yet life became unendurable to them" (S, p.289). To become a Ringwraith is the ultimate denial of identity, and the logical conclusion of the ambition which the Númenoreans set themselves.

The situations of the corrupted Númenoreans and the rebellious Noldor can be summed up in terms developed by Eliade. Myth was created in the primary world because of the human wish to escape from the change and insecurity of history and its flux of events through continual repetition of original acts through rite and ritual.[8] The mortal Númenoreans are part of the on-going movement of history, which ensures the continual passing of the order established by each generation. They try to escape by <u>becoming</u> "myth" through their attempted invasion of the "mythical" faërie land of the "mythical" Ainur and Elves. (Even if the invaders had been successful in occupying Aman its purpose would have failed, since the immortality of the Ainur and Elves is "built into" their racial nature just as mortality is an inherent part

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8. See Randel Helms, <u>Tolkien's World</u> (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974) pp.14 and 88 for brief discussions of the relation between Tolkien and Eliade's work on mythology.

of the Númenoreans, which means, according to the Valar's messengers, "'it is not the land of Manwë that makes its people deathless, but the Deathless that dwell therein have hallowed the land; and there you /the Númenoreans/ would but wither and grow weary the sooner, as moths in a light too strong and steadfast'" (S, p.264).) The invasion and its consequences create the "myth" of Númenor, "Atalantë in the Eldarin tongue" (S, p.281). The "mythical" Elves, safe out of history and its change in a timeless land, choose to enter history. They thus become subject to death and change, and escape deathlessness, an ambition which is (Tolkien speculates) discussed in their "mythical" stories.

Tolkien emphasizes the centrality of death in his works. Carpenter quotes or paraphrases Tolkien as saying "'all my stuff - both this new story /The Lord of the Rings/ and the earlier mythology from which it derives /The Silmarillion and The Hobbit/ is mainly concerned with the Fall, with mortality, and with the Machine. The Fall is an inevitable subject in any story about people; mortality in that the consciousness of it affects anyone who has creative desires that are left unsatisfied by plain biological life - any artist must desire great longevity; and by the Machine I mean the use of all external plans or devices, instead of the development of inner powers and talents - or even the use of those talents with the corrupted motive of dominating, of bullying the world and coercing other wills.'"[9] Elsewhere he is quoted "'If you really come down to any really large story that interests people and holds their attention for a considerable time, it is practically always a human story, and it is practically /always/ about one thing all the

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9. Humphrey Carpenter, The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams and their Friends (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1978), p.140.

time: death. The inevitability of death. Simone de Bouvier /sic/ once said that there is no such thing as a "natural" death. Nothing that ever happens to man is ever natural. And his presence calls the whole world into question. All men must die, but for every man his death is an accident, and even if he knows it /to be/... an unjustifiable violation. You may agree with those words or not, but those are the keyspring of The Lord of the Rings.'"[10] Death for humans is inevitable in the fallen world, but this is not how things should be, and, eventually, the cosmos will be re-created so as to conform with the over-ruling authority's idea of a perfect order when, "after the end of days... the themes of Ilúvatar shall be played aright" (S, p.15).

Melkor's rebellion and fall, which ensures the fall of the world, makes degeneration and the possibility of death inevitable. The other Ainur are affected, and there is a "ripple" effect which spreads and widens to include the Noldor, influence the Teleri (who understandably develop a grudge against the Noldor after the Kinslaying), and corrupt Men (the Easterlings in the First Age, and the Edain in the Second).

The "age of gold" at the beginning of the world (a concept common to world mythologies)[11] occurs, for Arda, during Melkor's imprisonment in the Halls of Mandos, when events throughout the created world, both in Aman and in Middle-earth, are as generally happy and serene as they will ever be. It is during this period that the Elves in Aman build

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10. Quoted by Daniel Grotta-Kurska, J.R.R. Tolkien: Architect of Middle Earth, ed. Frank Wilson (Philadelphia: Running Press, 1976), p.100.

11. See Eliade's Myth and Reality; also his Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return, trans. W.R. Trask (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955); and Christopher Dawson, Progress and Religion: An Historical Enquiry (London: Sheed and Ward, 1945) for discussions on this subject.

their cities and develop their knowledge, while in Middle-earth Melkor's servants are hiding, and Lúthien is born. This time is called the "Peace of Arda" (S, p.92).

However, even during this period, there are signs of the rebellion and destruction which will follow. Finwë loses his first wife, Fëanor's restlessness and tendency towards egotism become apparent, and, in Middle-earth, Melian warns Thingol that peace will not last forever, and Menegroth is built as a stronghold.

The corruption of the "age of gold" is interpreted as a move away from the deity or deities, and therefore from the source of order and the head of a creative unity. The result is degeneration and loss. When the Noldor, confused by Melkor's deceit and inflamed by the pride and egotism of Fëanor, elect to rebel against "natural theology" and the will of the Valar, they literally leave "heaven", the home of the "gods" and the geographical location closest, in spirit, to Eru. With the move away from Aman the Noldor's powers and abilities lessen because of the "mortalizing" effect of Middle-earth, to which is added the debilitating effect of exposure to, and a limited practice of, evil.[12] The Noldor are able to cross the Helcaraxë largely because they are "but new-come from the Blessed Realm, and not yet weary with the weariness of earth" (S, p.90). The Noldor's removal from the creative force of the cosmos is also seen in the deaths which befall all the leaders except Galadriel. When their physical bodies are destroyed they are necessarily removed to Mandos, where they need never have gone. Galadriel is forbidden to return because she has removed herself from God, and her response that she has no wish to return

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12. Cf. S, pp.49, 90, 110-111.

(whether she means it or not) indicates that she is not ready to do so. During the Second and Third Ages she matures and is allowed to return because of her work against Sauron (not Morgoth, who was one of the causes of her departure in that she followed him out of "Heaven" to "earth") and her refusal of the Ring which would preserve the realm for which she had left Aman. Having seen her mistake, she once more understands the will of Eru towards order and can return to the Undying Lands.

The Númenoreans, at one "remove" from Eru and the Valar, offer the first fruits in token of this separation (as Adam and Eve offer sacrifices when they are driven out of Eden). The very fact that such rites develop is an indication of disorder, in that in an ordered situation sacrifices and rituals would be as unnecessary between Eru and his creations as they are considered to be unnecessary between the Ainur and Elves who live together in Aman. It is an attempt to link themselves with the power which they can associate with only indirectly, through the Eldar who live in Aman, or fleeting contacts with the Valar, as when Eönwë teaches them at the end of the First Age. Originally they are quite aware of "natural theology" and of their place in Arda, much more aware than are the lesser Men of Middle-earth, who become "weak and fearful" and are under "the yoke of the offspring of Morgoth" (S, p.263) until the Dúnedain educate them. Although the Númenoreans act according to "natural theology" at first, they begin to fall under the influence of Morgoth's "seeds [that become] evil fruit, which would grow if any would tend them" (S, p.260). The warnings of the Valar are ignored, the Eldar are estranged, and the first fruits are no longer offered to Eru. In this way the Dúnedain's contact with Eru is self-severed. When, under the influence of Sauron, they turn to

worshipping Morgoth and Darkness, they do so by behaving according to a perversion of "natural theology". They do evil in the service of an evil god.[13] Their sacrifices to Morgoth are both a manifestation of evil behaviour and an attempt to reach their god. Morgoth requires that his followers give, as well as behave according to his idea of the correct ordering of society. At the destruction of Númenor, Tar-Míriel, too weak to keep her throne or enforce good behaviour from her subjects as her father had attempted to do, tries to return to Eru: "Too late she strove to ascend the steep ways of Meneltarma to the holy place" (S, p.266).

It is only Elendil and his people who survive, although even the Faithful "did not wholly escape from the affliction of their people, and they were troubled by the thought of death" (S, p.266); moreover, they, like the Elves, experience a physical decline in Middle-earth, as the corrupt Númenoreans do before Númenor is destroyed. In Middle-earth the remaining Númenoreans introduce the Standing Silence, where they "'look towards Númenor that was, and beyond to Elvenhome that is, and to that which is beyond Elvenhome and will ever be'" (II, pp.284-85). It is an acknowledgment of what has been lost through folly, and an effort to maintain contact with what remains. Prayers are uttered in Middle-earth, usually as a wish or hope for protection. They are answered, but it is a form of contact which is resorted to only in extreme emergencies, and often on occasions which potentially affect Arda in some crucial way. The weightiest example of the distance

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13. Cf. Théoden, who turns towards the "Dark" and nearly sacrifices his kingdom before Gandalf literally leads him to the "light"; and Denethor, who rejects Gandalf, tries to sacrifice his country and his son, and succeeds in burning himself on a pyre as the corrupt Númenoreans had murdered their victims.

between the inhabitants of Middle-earth and the divinities is the removal of the Undying Lands from "the circles of the world" (III, p.317), a removal which is effected after the Númenoreans, in defiance of Eru's order and a direct command from the Valar, try to bridge the distance between themselves and the divinities in a disastrous manner. During the War of the Ring, as Glover points out, "the uncertainty of the immediate situation leaves little basis for decision except a sense of what is ethically right."[14]

As Middle-earth's people fall away from Eru, Eru and the Ainur withdraw themselves from direct contact with them. During the First Age some of the Ainur visit Middle-earth, they interact with Elves and humans both before and after the flight of the Noldor, and at the end of the age they attack Morgoth in person. When Númenor becomes corrupt the Valar send messengers (presumably Maiar) and, just before the proposed invasion, eagles and threatening cloud formations which offer signs and omens. However, the Valar themselves do not intercede personally to try and correct the situation, and when Ar-Pharazôn lands, none of the Valar (or any other of the immortals) are seen by the invaders before they are overwhelmed by the power which Eru sends from a distance. The Undying Lands are then completely removed from all contact with the mortal world. During the Third Age the Valar send indirect manifestations of power (such as visions) and dispatch the Wizards, with, however, the proviso that the latter keep their true identities secret from all but a select few. At the beginning of the Fourth Age all those in Middle-earth who once lived in Aman return there.

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14. W.B. Glover, "The Christian Character of Tolkien's Invented World", Criticism, 13 (Winter 1971), p.39.

The fact that beings removed from Eru are, ultimately, powerless is given emphasis by their failure to achieve their goals. The "evil" characters cannot hope to win in any real sense, as Sam discovers: "Sam saw a white star twinkle for a while. The beauty of it smote his heart, as he looked up out of the forsaken land, and hope returned to him. For like a shaft, clear and cold, the thought pierced him that in the end the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach" (III, p.199).

At the same time, however, the "good" characters cannot achieve a lasting victory either. However good their intentions, they are still fallen. While they are correct to do their best to order the imperfect world, they cannot hope to establish a genuine, lasting order within it, since the effects of the fall on this world cannot be denied. The First and Second Ages end with an apparent restoration of order, but in reality there are always "loose ends" left over from the previous struggles. Utumno is cast down in the first overthrow of Melkor, but "the Valar did not discover all the mighty vaults and caverns hidden with deceit far under the fortresses of Angband and Utumno. Many evil things still lingered there, and others were dispersed and fled into the dark and roamed in the waste places of the world, awaiting a more evil hour; and Sauron they did not find" (S, p.51). Melkor is only imprisoned, not destroyed, and he is able to re-establish himself. In the War of Wrath the Valar rectify their previous mistake by exiling Morgoth and destroying his stronghold, but Sauron, Balrogs and Orcs remain to increase over the years. At the downfall of Númenor Sauron's physical body is wrecked, but he is able to return to Middle-earth and harass his enemies. At the end of the Second Age, "'Sauron was diminished, but not destroyed. His Ring was lost but not unmade.

The Dark Tower was broken, but its foundations were not removed'" (I, p.257). Since the progress of events has been so vastly disordered, literally ages are required before a true order can be restored at the end of the Third Age, when one stroke - the death of Sauron - decides the events which follow in that there are only two alternatives: either he will fall with the destruction of the Ring, in which case Middle-earth will be ruled by the strongest surviving authority; or he will regain the Ring and Middle-earth will be ruled by the only authority he will allow to survive - himself (leaving aside for the moment the fact that Eru is the ultimate authority both in and outside Middle-earth). No one, including the Ainu immediately in charge of the policy of Sauron's opponents, knows what fate Eru has decided to assign to the world. When his will is made known by the success of Frodo's mission and the preservation of the Captains of the West, the end towards which history has been working becomes clear: the brief reunion of the diverse races and social groups under a strong central authority before the non-human races, as well as the "supernatural" humans (the Númenoreans), decline and disperse with the rise and spread of the "common" man after the death of Elessar, who can be seen as the last fairy-tale prince whose passing marks the end of the fairy-tale world.

At the end of the Third Age the misdeeds and mistakes which have been accumulating and developing throughout the three ages come to a head. The Elves and Edain, formerly the great foes of Sauron, are hardly able to withstand the first attacks of the Ring-less Sauron. In the north there is a displaced king with no kingdom. In the south there is a kingdom with no king, and the Steward has become obsessed with the authority which is his only by default. In Rohan the king has sunk into weakness through the efforts of a corrupt and treacherous

counsellor. The Hobbits and Breelanders are so isolated that they have lost touch not only with the outside world but with history as well, and do not appreciate the protection which has enabled them to enjoy their peace and prosperity. The Ents are decreasing in numbers because of their estrangement from the Entwives, and they also are isolated and nearly forgotten. The Valar respond to the occasional appeals of Middle-earth's inhabitants, but they also are being forgotten. One of the Maíar sent by the Valar to combat these problems has fallen into evil and is plotting to usurp Sauron's place by becoming a Ring-lord. As a preliminary step he is invading the territories of Tree-beard and Théoden. Sauron has risen again and is searching for the One Ring to consolidate his already almost overwhelming power.[15]

At the end of the Third Age the main sources of disorder and the "loose ends" left over from earlier times are finally eliminated to a more complete extent than was possible at the end of the first two ages. The Ring is "returned" to its rightful owner, and both are destroyed. Gollum, who has outlived his time, dies in the involuntary service of Middle-earth. The three elven communities are brought into contact once more with each other and the outside world before the Elves leave Middle-earth forever to go to their true home. The Elf-Dwarf feud is resolved at the Council of Elrond (because Dáin recognizes that he needs Elrond's help), in Lothlórien (because of Galadriel's influence), and through the friendship of Legolas and Gimli. A re-appreciation of the natural world is initiated by the recognition of the Ents' help. The Hobbits and Breelanders are brought into contact

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15. Some of these points are made, with a different perspective, by Deborah C. Rogers, "Everyclod and Everyhero: The Image of Man in Tolkien", in A Tolkien Compass, ed. Jared C. Lobdell (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing Co., 1975), p.69-76.

with the outside world and re-enter history after having "passed... out of the history of Men and of Elves" (I, pp.13-14), but are able to preserve their distinction as unique communities. Gandalf exposes Wormtongue's treachery and restores Théoden to his rightful place before the old king dies to give way to a younger leader. Denethor, unable to accept a new order, dies. The Reunited Kingdom is established, power is returned to the rightful King, and through his marriage "the long-sundered branches of the half-elven were reunited and their line was restored" (III, p.314). Saruman's treachery is also revealed by Gandalf, and, at his death, he is denied a return to Valinor, presumably going to "'the nothingness that awaits you and your Master /the Nazgûl-Lord and Sauron/'" (III, p.103). His death, as well as the deaths of the other morally ambivalent characters (Denethor, Gollum and Boromir) implies the restoration of true order and the movement of everyone into their correct places, since, as Northrop Frye puts it, "Self-recognition, or attaining one's original identity, reverses all the Narcissus and doppelganger themes...."[16] Gandalf, his task completed, and Bilbo and Frodo who no longer belong in Middle-earth, leave with the departing Elves who also do not belong in the mortal world.

Yet while the errors of the past are rectified as far as possible, the past and the results of the negative deeds of the past cannot be denied. Thus, while the centre or main embodiment of evil is effectively destroyed and joins his master Melkor in "nothingness", evil itself cannot be eradicated because it is built into the world. The ousting of Saruman and the scouring of the Shire are accomplished after the fall of the Barad-dûr, and a large part of Aragorn's task as

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16. Northrop Frye, The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 152.

King is to try to tidy up "loose ends" which are not on a scale with, for example, Isildur's failure to destroy the Ring but are still opposed to order, and to try to prevent small problems from becoming larger ones (cf. III, pp.249,261,352). The lesser or more diffuse forms of evil are appropriate to the changing situation of the world: "When evil ceases to be concentrated but becomes spread thin through the world, we are no longer in the black and white of mythology, no longer in the world Tolkien created, but in our own real world where all the shades are grey."[17] The difference between "mythology" - the First, Second and Third Ages - and "history" - the Fourth Age which is our age - is described thus by Tolkien: "'What you have is an imaginary period in which mythology was still existing in the real world. Let's say you would have abstract figures - not abstract figures, but myths incarnate; but once that's gone, scattered, dispersed, all you get is the history of human beings - the play of good and evil in history, no more devils or angels to be seen walking about.'"[18]

While the establishment of order at the beginning of the Fourth Age means that everyone will find his or her correct place, both geographic and cosmic, there is no restored Paradise (that is, perfection) because loss is inevitable and the effects of evil "'cannot be wholly cured'" (III, p.268). It is the fate of Men to rule - through numbers

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17. Bill Cater, "The Filial Duty of Christopher Tolkien", Sunday Times Magazine, 25 September 1977, p.61. L. Sprague de Camp queried Tolkien about the lack of formal worship in The Lord of the Rings: "I was not sure that I understood Tolkien's reply. He said something to the effect that in those days (he assumed) good and evil had not become so mixed up as they were later." See L. Sprague de Camp, Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers: The Makers of Heroic Fantasy (Sauk City, Wisc.: Arkham House, 1976), p.245.

18. Quoted by G. Monsman, "The Imaginary World of J.R.R. Tolkien", South Atlantic Quarterly, 69 (Spring 1970), p.266.

if not through power and splendour - and the fate of the other, "Faërie" races to disappear along with the "angelic", elvish and "demonic" hosts. The retreat of the Elves, either at the end of the Third Age or soon after (before the end of Elessar's reign) has already been mentioned. The Dwarves, a declining people, are re-confirmed in Erebor and found a new community in Aglarond, but Gimli's departure with Legolas symbolically points to the disappearance of his race, as does the more "concrete" evidence of the genealogical table (III, p.361) which names Durin VII and Last as the final Dwarf ruler (of Durin's House). The Ents withdraw into Fangorn; and Hobbits, although enjoying a period of great prosperity and historical prominence during Elessar's reign, are fated to join the "leprechauns" and "fairies" (those Elves who remain in Middle-earth and, as Galadriel predicts, "'dwindle to a rustic folk of dell and cave, slowly to forget and to be forgotten'" (I, p.380)), as indicated in the opening description offered by Tolkien in The Hobbit. Significantly, all these countries and realms are under the direct or indirect rule of the Reunited Kingdom. The historical decline of Men from their former greatness, and the vitality of the "'Men of the Twilight'" (II, p.287) in relation to the few and declining Númenoreans, ensure that, after the reign of Elessar, "'the last of the Númenoreans and the latest King of the Elder Days'" (III, p.343), "common" humans will inherit Middle-earth. Middle-earth under Elessar can be seen as a version of Camelot: the greatest example of order possible to the inhabitants of a fallen world, an example which must pass because it is impossible for a people who have declined from the stature of their ancestors to maintain the latter's standards.

The fact that "'Even for those who are mightiest under Ilúvatar there is some work that they may accomplish once, and once only'" (S,

p.78) ensures that the world itself will be more common. The Two Trees and the Silmarils are lost or destroyed before the end of the First Age, and their light can now be seen only in derivative forms such as the sun, moon and stars. Many of the Númenorean crafts and works of art are lost in the island's fall. In the Third Age the "magical" palantíri are lost or ruined; Lórien, Galadriel's creation, declines and is deserted (in the Fourth Age); the Three Rings lose their power; the Dwarves lose much of their knowledge and craft. The "common" world ruled by "common" humans - our world - is the end towards which the historical process of the first three ages has been directed by Ilúvatar. "The whole past of Middle-earth is the story of a continuous decline from greatness",[19] and the reason for this decline is that "the flux of Time implies an ever greater distance from the 'beginnings', and hence loss of the original perfection. Whatever endures wastes away, degenerates, and finally perishes."[20] The movement away from Eru and its negative results are in accordance with the mythic quality of the first three ages of the world: "Almost all... theories of the 'Great Time' are found in conjunction with the myth of successive ages, the 'age of gold' always occurring at the beginning of the cycle, close to the paradigmatic illud tempus."[21] The "middle" Men do not have the potential either to rise as high as the Númenoreans or fall as far: after splendour comes mediocrity. The end of the Third Age is a culmination and conclusion of mythology: time has worked itself out, and all the mysteries are revealed.

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19. Evans, p.65.

20. Eliade, Myth and Reality, p.51.

21. Eliade, Cosmos and History, p.112.

However, the purpose of the myth remains, even after the living myths themselves have given way to every day history. It is for the mediocre - "us" - to look into the "past" as presented by Tolkien in his fairy-stories, and to remember what has gone before and be inspired by what was and perceive how we arrived at what is. Sandra Miesel states: "It is the voluntary renunciation responsible for these losses that makes them meaningful. Some have given up what they love most so that others may live fruitfully. Marvels cease so that more homely realities may endure."[22] Most important is the possibility of once more seeing and acting in accordance with the will of Eru: "the essential thing is to know the myths. It is essential not only because the myths provide him /man/ with an explanation of the World and his own mode of being in the World, but above all because, by re-collecting the myths, by re-enacting them, he is able to repeat what the Gods, the Heroes, or the Ancestors did ab origine. To know the myths is to learn the secret of the origin of things."[23] Tolkien is trying to get back to "the origin of things" - to God, the ultimate source of order.

In the Fourth Age, after Elessar's reign, the policy of inter-dependence and mutual respect suffers a breakdown when humans begin to encroach (in the manner of Morgoth, Sauron and Saruman, for example) on the territories of others. Arda's history contains the record of other such breakdowns. The Númenoreans turn against the Elves during the Second Age, and during the Third Age the inter-dependence of the Mirkwood Elves, Erebor Dwarves and Dale-men is disrupted by Smaug. Farther back, and on a larger scale, the tenuous alliances among the

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22. Sandra Miesel, "Some Religious Aspects of Lord of the Rings", Riverside Quarterly, 3 (August 1968), p.212.

23. Eliade, Myth and Reality, pp.13-14.

various branches of the Noldor, the Sindar, the Edain, some Easterlings and some Dwarves in the wars against Morgoth in the First Age and Sauron in the Second Age fall apart because of internal quarrels and external pressures. As leaders are killed and communities wiped out, surviving individuals and groups become more isolated physically and sympathetically and more involved in immediate concerns and local problems. The difference in the Fourth Age, Tolkien implies, is that communication between different groups and races has been broken beyond repair and there is no possibility, in this world, of rediscovering other peoples and regaining a wider perspective - except through fairy-stories of the past, through which it is possible to satisfy "the desire to converse with other living things" (OFS, p.58). By losing touch with other individual parts of the whole, those living in the Fourth Age have lost touch with Eru's order, and no longer perceive the value of "otherness", the inevitability of mutual dependence, or the possibility of being a fulfilled individual by working with others as part of an unity instead of against others. It is through fairy-stories that Tolkien saw, and tried to communicate, through the creation of a mythology, "the underlying reality or truth" (OFS, p.62), the vision of order in which things are seen as they are meant to be seen.

Chapter VIII - Conclusion

According to C.S. Lewis, the central difference between the Homeric heroes of "Primary epic" and the Virgilian hero Aeneas of a "Secondary epic" is that the latter is able to look beyond himself and his immediate personal interests to perceive the importance of an overruling fate or destiny which is concerned with events that will have a permanent significance and will affect people and situations connected only remotely or not at all with himself. Lewis states that Secondary Epic can deal with a "great subject" in a way that Primary Epic can not:

> That kind of greatness arises only when some event can be held to effect a profound and more or less permanent change in the history of the world, as the founding of Rome did, or still more, the fall of man. Before any event can have that significance, history must have some degree of pattern, some design. The mere endless up and down, the constant aimless alternations of glory and misery, which make up the terrible phenomenon called a Heroic Age, admit no such design. No one event is really much more important than another. No achievement can be permanent: today we kill and feast, tomorrow we are killed, and our women led away as slaves. Nothing "stays put', nothing has a significance beyond the moment. Heroism and tragedy there are in plenty, therefore good stories in plenty; but no 'large design that brings the world out of the good to ill'. The total effect is not a pattern, but a kaleidoscope. 1

Because no one event seems more important than another, except in a specific sense to the person or persons most directly involved, the Homeric hero has, in fact, no impetus to look beyond his immediate personal interests. When Aeneas falls in love with Dido he momentarily loses sight of world issues in favour of his own happiness. Jove's

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1. Clive Staples Lewis, A Preface to "Paradise Lost" (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), pp.29-30.

instructions to Mercury make it plain that, while there will be personal glory for Aeneas in his establishment of Rome, such an issue is less important than Rome itself, while Aeneas' personal happiness is of no real ultimate importance at all compared with the demands of his duty to the world and the future:

> Go quick, my son, whistle up the Zephyrs and wing
> your way
> Down to the Trojan leader, who is dallying now in Carthage
> Without one thought for the city which fate has assigned
> to be his.
> Carry my dictate along the hastening winds and tell him,
> Not for such ways did his matchless mother guarantee him
> To us, nor for such ends rescue him twice from the Greeks;
> Rather, that he should rule an Italy fertile in leadership
> And loud with war, should hand on a line which sprang from
> the noble
> Teucer and bring the whole world under a system of law.
> If the glory of such great exploits no longer fires his heart
> And for his own renown he will make no effort at all,
> Does he grudge his son, Ascanius, the glory of Rome to be?
> What aim, what hope does he cherish, delaying there in a hostile
> Land, with no thought for posterity or his Italian kingdom?
> Let him sail. That is the gist. Give him that message from me.[2]

(Since there is no indication that Ascanius is unhappy in Carthage or anxious to inherit an Italian kingdom, it can be assumed that his personal happiness also does not weigh against his obligations to the realm and people he is destined to lead.) Aeneas, in effect, agrees to be an agent of order, and to be used as an instrument in establishing that order.

Aeneas' submission to the demands of a destiny which will affect people and events outside his immediate personal concerns is connected to his realization that while he is important, indeed essential, to the fulfilment of destiny, there are others who are equally important and who will also play a vital role in the establishment and future of Rome. His vision in Elysium is not of his own deeds, either past or

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2. Virgil, The Aeneid, Book IV, 11. 223-37, trans. C. Day Lewis (London: The Hogarth Press, 1952), p.79.

future, or of people and events of which he will have any first-hand knowledge, but of those future beings to whom he must acknowledge a responsibility even though they are beyond his immediate personal interests (Odysseus during his parallel descent to the underworld sees, asks about and discusses only people and events which concern himself). Aeneas can perceive that there is such a thing as intrinsic order ("a system of law "), that he has a responsibility to embody that order in a community which he will rule, and that, just as there are matters which must be important to him besides his personal concerns, there are and will be others besides himself who will be important to that community and to order. He is even willing to ask the help of the alien Arcadians, who are related to the Greeks, in repulsing the common enemy, establishing the new Trojan community and, through it, an eventual orderly unification of all Italy which ends such conflicts as that between the Latins and the Arcadians.

With regard to the subject of order and disorder, Tolkien's characters are of both the Homeric and Virgilian types, and occasionally develop from one into the other. For example, in The Silmarillion Fëanor and Túrin can be described as Homeric. Both seem to be unaware of order as an intrinsic force; certainly both reject those representatives of order who are the authority figures over them, in that Fëanor breaks the decree of the Valar and actively rebels against them, and Túrin breaks the law of Doriath, flees, and refuses Thingol's pardon. Both Fëanor and Túrin are blatantly irresponsible towards those to whom they have obligations, and in fact betray them, because they are intensely interested in what they believe to be their "just dues" as individuals. H.D.F. Kitto points out that, in a Homeric hero, "what moves him to deeds of heroism is not a sense of duty as

we understand it - duty towards others: it is rather duty towards himself. He strives after that which we translate 'virtue', but is in Greek aretê, 'excellence'."[3] Both Fëanor and Túrin place their highest priority upon individual aretê, and neither can see beyond himself to perceive that, while he is an important part of the whole, he is not the whole itself, or even the most important component.

There are several heroes in The Silmarillion who are more generous and less irresponsible than Fëanor or Túrin, and who fall somewhere between the Homeric and Virgilian classifications. Beren, Finrod, Tuor and Eärendil, for example, are all aware of their responsibility to people and issues beyond themselves: Beren, his family and followers unite with the Elves against Morgoth because they recognize that the latter is "evil" and as such should be fought; Finrod helps the alien race of Men who, the Elves have been told, will supplant them, and gives his life for one of them; Tuor fights against the "evil" Easterlings; Eärendil undertakes to intercede with the Valar for Elves and Men and beg for help against Morgoth. At the same time, however, these characters are not uninfluenced by a consciousness of what is due to themselves and by what they feel is essential for their own personal happiness. Beren knows that it is wrong for the Silmarils, the "holy jewels", to be in the possession of Morgoth, but his reason for undertaking to remove one from the latter's crown is based on a matter of personal interest. Finrod agrees to help Beren largely because he had, in payment of a debt to Beren's father, sworn an oath to assist the latter's family in any circumstances, and it is incumbent upon him to keep his word even if it means leaving his realm and his people. Tuor has a personal grudge against the Easterlings, and, after

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3. H.D.F. Kitto, The Greeks (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951), p.58.

delivering his message to Turgon as directed by a representative of order, remains in Gondolin out of personal preferences, rather than returning to fight against the Easterlings, and he does not fight against Morgoth's forces at all until Gondolin is attacked. Eärendil's seafaring originates out of his love for the sea and his wish to seek his parents, and he undertakes the voyage which proves successful largely because, his home and community having been devastated and his children kidnapped by the remaining sons of Fëanor, he has no place in Middle-earth to which he can return.

Something of the same combination of motives can be observed in Bilbo's attitude. He undertakes the quest because Glóin affirms that "'He looks more like a grocer than a burglar'" (H, p.17), and this personal issue continues to trouble him long after any possible doubt about his ability has been routed: fleeing with the cup from Smaug's hoard he thinks "'I've done it! This will show them. "More like a grocer than a burglar" indeed! Well, we'll hear no more of that'" (H, p.198). He has, in fact, not heard any of "that" for some time, having proved his worth in the fight with the spiders and during the escape from the Elves. Despite his interest in his reputation and <u>aretê</u>, however, Bilbo recognizes the claims of order - which he describes as "'peace and quiet'" (H, p.265) - and is willing to sacrifice his good name with Thorin and the Dwarves in his efforts "'to avoid trouble for all concerned'" (H, p.249).

With regard to the heroes of <u>The Lord of the Rings</u>, the situation is somewhat different. Boromir is, like Fëanor and Túrin, a "pure" Homeric hero in his egotism, his lack of interest in, or indeed comprehension of, matters outside his immediate personal concerns, and his betrayal of those to whom he is responsible and of the cause of

order because of his selfishness. Aragorn, on the other hand, can be described as a Virgilian hero. He knows his own worth, and does not blush and stammer with modesty, real or assumed, when he is praised or hailed by others as being a great person. Although he initially keeps his name secret for what might be described as "security reasons", as the situation advances and changes he has no hesitation in revealing who he is if the circumstances seem to warrant the disclosure (such as during the first meeting with Éomer) and when he does so he claims his full litany of titles and expects others to acknowledge the glorious heritage which they imply. The question of his aretê and a recognition of it by others is further involved with his personal interests in that he must achieve the kingship of both Arnor and Gondor in order to win Elrond's consent to his marriage with Arwen. Obviously he cannot achieve such a task without fully displaying his aretê and ensuring that it is widely acknowledged.

However, Aragorn, like Aeneas, is also conscious of his responsibility to others as well as himself, and of the fact that there are more important matters than his personal happiness. His revelation of his identity and his abilities have an aspect which is practical in the larger, cosmic sense in that, to fulfil the position of leader which he is often obliged to assume, he must assure his followers that he is capable of leading well. He can only do this by demonstrating his aretê. He does not display it when there is no practical value, or when there is possible danger, in doing so (although, of course, it is possible for his true potential to be discerned or suppected under his disguise). Even in a matter which is closely involved with his personal happiness he accepts that, as a "public" person, he must take his larger responsibilities into account: one of the reasons why he

wishes to marry is to provide an heir to rule his realm after his death. Kocher points out that, in offering to accompany Frodo to Mordor, he implies that he is willing to surrender both the opportunity for personal happiness and his potential kingship: "He thereby renounces his opportunity to fight for Gondor's capital, and all that goes with it - Arwen, the throne, the hope of leading an army cleanly against Sauron - for a share in what reason tells him is a hopeless enterprise."[4] Because Frodo is more likely to achieve his quest with his help, Aragorn weighs his immediate responsibility to help the Ring-bearer save the world against his potential responsibilities if the world is saved, and decides that the former is heavier even if it means that he is killed and unable to fulfil the latter if the world is saved. Aragorn is also a Virgilian hero in that he realizes that, while he is an important part of the whole, others have equally valuable roles to play and skills to contribute. He can envisage the inter-related nature of the world.

Besides the Homeric hero as represented by Boromir and the Virgilian hero as represented by Aragorn, Tolkien depicts heroes who are in transition. Éomer is initially concerned only with matters relating to himself and his. When Gimli insults him (does not acknowledge his aretê) he is ready to fight to avenge the insult and assert his claim to public recognition. He is also anxious to defend Rohan and ensure that the Rohirric way of life is preserved (in this particular respect he is closer to Hector than Achilles). However, his outlook expands to include those who are "other" than himself, and a realization that Sauron must be fought not primarily because his

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4. Paul H. Kocher, Master of Middle-Earth: The Fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972), p.147.

forces have damaged Rohan's land and stolen its horses but because he is the central embodiment of "evil" which must, if possible and at all costs, be destroyed.

Incongruous as it may seem, Frodo is, initially, a Homeric type of character (he does not behave as any kind of a conventional hero until later in the story) in that he is concerned with his own role in the Ring's history, he has almost no awareness of larger issues, and when he is made aware of them he is unwilling to assume any responsibility towards them. When he first learns of the Ring's true significance, he thinks of it as related to himself and his own welfare. When told that Sauron "'greatly desires it - but he must <u>not</u> get it'" (I, p.60), Frodo does not immediately announce "I will destroy it" or "it must be destroyed". Instead, he focuses on his personal involvement with it: "'How, how on earth did it come to me?'" (I, p.60). Learning of Gollum's part in the tale, he rejects the idea that Gollum is a Hobbit (that is, like Frodo himself, preferring to think that he is "other"), and regrets the latter's past and present existence as an inconvenience to himself, rather than seeing beyond himself to what Gollum is. His reaction centres on his own role: "'what am I to do? For now I am really afraid. What am I to do?'" (I, p.68), and "'even if Bilbo could not kill Gollum, I wish he had not kept the Ring. I wish that he had never found it, and that I had not got it! Why did you let me keep it? Why didn't you make me throw it away, or, or destroy it?'" (I, p.69). Upon the topic of the Ring's destruction, he asserts "'I do really wish to destroy it! ... Or, well, to have it destroyed. I am not made for perilous quests. I wish I had never seen the Ring! Why did it come to me? Why was I chosen?'" (I, p.70). He is unwilling to assume the responsibility for its destruction

although he realizes its power, the more so because his self-image suggests that his aretê (excellence) does not lie in the areas in which a quest hero, he thinks, should excel, and asks Gandalf to assume the responsibility. Part of his desire to evade the quest is a conviction that he is genuinely not suitable for the task and it should be undertaken by someone who is, but this is combined with an equally genuine (and understandable) wish to avoid any further involvement with a matter which he feels is far beyond his own concerns. When Frodo finally realizes the Shire is irrevocably involved and that he must take a certain amount of responsibility for preserving his homeland, he still does not fully accept a final responsibility for the Ring, telling Gandalf "'I hope that you may find some other better keeper soon'" (I, p.71). It is only at the Council that he acknowledges his inability to evade the quest.

Just as, at the end of the interview with Gandalf, Frodo perceives that he has a responsibility to the Shire which is larger than his responsibility to himself, during his journey through other communities - Tom Bombadil's house and domain, Bree, Rivendell, Balin's devastated colony in Moria, Lórien, Ithilien - he comes to realize that his quest concerns not only his own home and people and time but the whole of Middle-earth for an age to come. However, just as he expands his vision to embrace an awareness of others and what is due to them, he also expands his vision of himself and what is due to himself. When he sees the Lord of the Nazgûl and his army leave Minas Morgul he is momentarily overcome: "'Even if my errand is performed, no one will ever know. There will be no one I can tell. It will be in vain'" (II, p.316). This is a regret for the fact that his aretê will not be acknowledged by others. However, this reflection also holds his

awareness of his obligations to others and a regret for something more than a loss of public recognition: "suddenly his heart went out to Faramir. 'The storm has burst at last,' he thought. 'This great array of spears and swords is going to Osgiliath. Will Faramir get across in time? He guessed it, but did he know the hour? And who can now hold the fords when the King of the Nine Riders comes? And other armies will come. I am too late. All is lost. I tarried on the way. All is lost'" (II, p.316). His final resolution moves beyond a concern for others to a recognition of his duty to the errand for its own sake even if it is accomplished too late to succeed in saving the world and so fulfilling its aim: "Despair had not left him, but the weakness had passed. He even smiled grimly, feeling now as clearly as a moment before he had felt the opposite, that what he had to do, he had to do, if he could, and that whether Faramir or Aragorn or Elrond or Galadriel or Gandalf or anyone else ever knew about it was beside the purpose" (II, p.317). He must attempt to establish order in the world even if no one survives to praise the deed or even benefit from it. When the subject of public recognition and an immortal name arises again, during his discussion with Sam on the stairs of Cirith Ungol, it becomes a pleasant, cheering diversion, rather than a motive inspiring action: "'to hear you somehow makes me as merry as if the story was already written'" (II, p.322).

It is partly the lure of a famous name and the focus of public attention and admiration which tempts Sam to put on the Ring: "Wild fantasies arose in his mind; and he saw Samwise the Strong, Hero of the Age, striding with a flaming sword across the darkened land, and armies flocking to his call as he marched to the overthrow of Barad-dûr. And then all the clouds rolled away, and the white sun shone, and at

his command the vale of Gorgoroth became a garden of flowers and trees and brought forth fruit. He had only to put on the Ring and claim it for his own, and all this could be" (III, p.177). He resists the temptation due to his love for Frodo, someone outside himself (Sam is always conscious of what he regards as the differences between Frodo and himself) and because "he knew in the core of his heart that he was not large enough to bear such a burden" (III, p.177). His vision of order embraces his era of history and a large portion of its space, and he knows that he cannot establish order on such a vast scale, such a task being more appropriate to someone like Gandalf or Aragorn. Rather, it is in him to order "one small garden of a free gardener" which "was all his need and due, not a garden swollen to a realm; his own hands to use, not the hands of others to command" (III, p.177; he succeeds in restoring order to the Shire, the "garden" of Middle-earth; cf. Galadriel's speech, I, p.392, and the description of the Shire, III, pp.303-04). His evaluation "'All the big important plans are not for my sort'" (II, p.321) is a just one. Sam can see beyond himself to others, such as Frodo and Elves, but he has difficulties with such intangibles as responsibility to a larger concept. As a materialist, he fixes his loyalties to externals he can physically sense, such as Frodo, or a garden. He makes an effort to assume responsibility for the world and its welfare when he believes Frodo is dead, and takes the Ring: "'I've made up my mind,' he kept saying to himself. But he had not. Though he had done his best to think it out, what he was doing was altogether against the grain of his nature. 'Have I got it wrong?' he muttered. 'What ought I to have done?'" (II, p.342). As a Hobbit and therefore materialistic by nature, and as a particular product of his race, society and class, Sam's assumption of the Ring and its responsibilities is a kind of self-violation. In

other words, he is, with the best intentions, momentarily untrue to his own nature, and this explains the internal disorder he experiences. When the Orcs discover Frodo's body, Sam's true nature immediately reasserts itself: "He flung the Quest and all his decisions away, and fear and doubt with them. He knew now where his place was and had been: at his master's side, though what he could do there was not clear" (II, p.344).

The primary motive which decides the actions of the major heroes of The Lord of the Rings is that of external responsibility, a duty to others and/or to something outside the self. In this respect they obviously differ in a very central way from many heroes of mythology and fairy-story, whose primary motive is duty to self, with external considerations, if they are acknowledged at all, definitely taking a secondary importance. Tolkien's heroes, sometimes reluctantly and only after overcoming a certain amount of ignorance produced by their environments (as in the cases of Éomer and Frodo), acknowledge their obligations to look outside themselves and act on behalf of others. Those who can, metaphorically, see widest and farthest - Elrond, Galadriel, Gandalf, Aragorn - can perceive the significance of individual events and the effects of an over-ruling order most clearly. These visionary internationalists have the service of order and other peoples as their primary motive from before the beginning of the story. Characters like Éomer, Frodo and Théoden change their attitudes and priorities during the course of events; even so, given their cultural backgrounds, their outlooks remain relatively "national" in that Rohan and the Shire remain, perhaps inevitably, the centres of importance,

geographically speaking.[5] Sam's vision is still more limited, but his return to Frodo sums up, in one gesture, the necessity incumbent upon the "good" characters to reject isolation and "be with" someone and/or something outside self. Gollum's most "human" moment occurs in Cirith Ungol when he sees Frodo as Frodo, an individual, rather than as the Ring-bearer or "part" of the Ring of which Gollum is a "part". The journey through Mordor, during which Frodo requires Sam's help and, at the end, Gollum's, points to the necessity of unifying individuals rather than isolating them. The very awareness of an "otherness", someone or something external to the self, which takes priority, distinguishes these heroes from, for example, Achilles or Roland, who regard others as extensions of the self (Patroclus) or tools to be used by the self for its own purposes (the French army).

In Tolkien, the hero must be or become aware of the relationships among and mutual dependence of himself and other agents of order (that is, other parts of the whole) if chaos is to be defeated. (It should be remembered that Melkor's rebellious thoughts begin to occur because he travels alone into the Void: he lacks the context provided by the presence of others, and develops exaggerated ideas of his own importance.) Because an Elf or a Dwarf acts both as an individual and as a representative of his particular community and race, an acceptance of the alien individual is an acknowledgment both of the individual and of those whom he represents. This acknowledgment is one of the reasons why, for example, the friendship between Legolas and Gimli is so important. It is largely because the protagonists of

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5. Very strictly speaking, Gandalf might be considered the only real internationalist in that he has no home in Middle-earth as do Elrond and Galadriel, and no hope of one, as Aragorn does, even if they are successful in defeating Sauron.

The Silmarillion cannot unite in the face of a common enemy that they are almost obliterated before Earendil, speaking both for all the Elves of Middle-earth and for Men, can request the Valar to act as the leaders of all Elves (including those still in Aman, some of whom have a grudge against the rebels in Middle-earth) and all Men. The quest in The Hobbit succeeds because the Dwarves do not rely solely on their own people. They enlist the aid of Gandalf and Bilbo, and receive the help of Elves, Beorn, Eagles, Men, the thrush, and the ravens, utilizing the individual talents and qualities each has to offer. The Battle of Five Armies is won because there are three armies, as well as the Eagles and individuals such as Gandalf and Beorn, on the "good" side. It is because such divisive facts as the Elf-Dwarf feud and the tendency of each community to withdraw into itself are resolved at the end of the Third Age through the recognition of each representative hero by the other representatives that Sauron is defeated. This is the point of Gandalf's statement to Bilbo that "'only a small part is played in great deeds by any hero'" (I, p.283). In this respect - the ability to see themselves in relationship to others, to maintain a perspective which includes both self-worth and the worth of others - that heroes such as Gandalf, Aragorn and Frodo differ markedly from heroes such as Achilles, Beowulf and Beorhtnoth, who see others as they are useful or inconvenient to themselves.

The alliance of the "free peoples" against Sauron into a Fellowship which functions as a union of individuals demonstrates the relationships among representative agents of order with their contemporaries. In The Lord of the Rings the characters must learn to relate to the past, to shape their present actions which will determine the future. For example, Frodo gets confused and lost every time he tries

to act alone. He does not know where to go with the Ring until the wisdom of Gandalf directs him towards Rivendell. He leads Sam and Pippin on a chaotic route (unintentionally, to escape the agents of chaos) until he is re-directed by Pippin, who recognizes the Stock-brook and then Farmer Maggot's lane from past visits. At the edge of the Old Forest he must rely on Merry, who has been inside before and knows of the old Brandybuck path, and when they are trapped deep within the wood and later on the barrow-downs he needs the help of the ancient Tom Bombadil. At Bree Frodo must accept the guidance of Aragorn, who knows the way to Rivendell because of past journeys. After he and Sam leave the Company they follow Gollum across the Dead Marshes and around Mordor, a route / the latter knows because he had previously travelled there. In Ithilien, Faramir leads them through a land he has been guarding and shelters them in an ancient stronghold. Even at Mount Doom they are guided by the past: they ascend by Sauron's Road, built as a path to his forges.

These guides enable Frodo to travel on pre-established routes to fulfil his pre-established destiny. By following old trails pointed out by others who have a knowledge which comes from the past, he is recreating the journeys of those who had previously made and used the trails. In his present, moment-by-moment history he is re-creating a pattern made in past history which is now related as "myth" or tale or legend. This is made explicit in the discussion between Frodo and Sam in Cirith Ungol:

> "The brave things in the old tales and songs, Mr. Frodo; adventures, as I used to call them. I used to think that they were things the wonderful folk of the stories went out and looked for, because they wanted them, because they were exciting and life was a bit dull, a

> kind of a sport,[6] as you might say. But that's not the way of it with the tales that really mattered, or the ones that stay in the mind. Folk seem to have been just landed in them, usually - their paths were laid that way, as you put it. But I expect they had lots of chances, like us, of turning back, only they didn't. And if they had we shouldn't know, because they'd have been forgotten.[7] We hear about those as just went on - and not all to a good end, mind you; at least not to what folk inside a story and not outside it call a good end. You know, coming home, and finding things all right, though not quite the same - like old Mr. Bilbo. But those aren't always the best tales to hear, though they may be the best tales to get landed in! I wonder what sort of a tale we've fallen into?"
>
> "I wonder," said Frodo, "But I don't know. And that's the way of a real tale. Take any one that you're fond of. You may know, or guess, what kind of a tale it is, happy-ending or sad-ending, but the people in it don't know. And you don't want them to."
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> "No, sir, of course not. Beren now, he never thought he was going to get that Silmaril from the Iron Crown in Thangorodrim, and yet he did, and that was a worse place and a blacker danger than ours. But that's a long tale, of course, and goes on past the happiness and into grief and beyond it - and the Silmaril went on and came to Eärendil. And why, sir, I never thought of that before! We've got - you've got some of the light of it in that star-glass that the Lady gave you! Why, to think of it, we're in the same tale still! It's going on. Don't the great tales never end?"
>
> "No, they never end as tales," said Frodo. "But the people in them come, and go when their part's ended. Our part will end later - or sooner."
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> (II, pp.320-21)

The Hobbits realize that they are still fighting the same war against the same opposition and performing the same actions as the mythic/historic Beren and Eärendil. The same symbols - star, light, darkness -

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6. Sam is, to a certain extent, correct: some heroes, such as Beowulf and Beorhtnoth, do regard "adventures" as a "sport" and seek them out because "life is a bit dull". In Tolkien's World (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp.64-82, Randel Helms traces the development of Tolkien's attitude towards "heroism" through the two essays "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" (1937) and "Ofermod" (1953), and makes some valuable comments on the differences between the "traditional" heroism of Beowulf and Beorhtnoth, and the heroism of the Hobbits.

7. Cf. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, 2nd ed., Bollingen Series XVII (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp.49-68, on "The Call to Adventure" and "Refusal of the Call".

represent the same values which are held by the "good" characters in the present as well as in the past.

The influence of mythic/historic patterns is evident in other ways. Elrond gives an account of the battle at the gates of Mordor at the end of the Second Age, and the battle is "repeated" at the end of the Third Age. Aragorn describes Isildur's action with regard to the Dead, and fulfils his ancestor's prophecy by re-creating Isildur's summons of the oath-breakers to fight against Sauron. In certain cases the protagonists of ancient myth/history are specifically represented: Arwen and Aragorn "are" Lúthien and Beren, while Aragorn "is" Elendil and Isildur; in the warrior Erkenbrand "'lived again the valour of Helm the Hammerhand'" (II, p.136). The characters are and remain themselves, but they are "like" their predecessors, as Frodo is "like" Bilbo, and to a certain extent re-creates his relative's life (see, for example, I, pp.74,78,79,92,218,342).

The influence of the mythic/historic patterns acts as a reassurance to the "good" characters, a message that they are not alone in their struggle, that others have gone before them and there is hope that others will come after them. It is noticeable that heroes of traditional myth do not have this reassurance. They rely on recitals of their pedigrees, a memory of past deeds usually reaching no further back than the generations of their fathers or grandfathers, and an acknowledgment of their personal positions by their contemporaries and of their social standing by the other members of their social groups. This is one reason why /in Homer it is important for each Greek commander to be called by name and given his due honour when he is summoned or addressed, because it proves that the speaker, literally, knows who the other man is. The hero's reliance on himself and his immediate

ancestors (those closest to him) for social definition means that any act which downgrades or de-values his self, whether committed by himself or others, ensures a virtual loss of identity, because there is no conception of a precedent or reassuring historical pattern to reinforce his identity. Tolkien's characters have the traditional reinforcement - Frodo announces himself as "Frodo son of Drogo" (II, p.266) of the Shire, and Aragorn's string of titles and names has already been mentioned - but their source of reassurance extends to the past as well.

Moreover, the mythic/historic patterns of which the heroes of The Lord of the Rings become aware point to the overall order which exists under Eru. Ignorant characters, such as the Hobbits, first come to know this order as it functions in the present, through their own experiences, as when Sam realizes that the Lórien Elves "belong" in their land as the Hobbits do in the Shire. By learning about people and events of the past, they can increase their knowledge and understanding of order, perceiving that there is always hope in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds and that defeat is not necessarily final. That this last maxim applies (in the fallen world) to the "evil" as well as the "good" is a lesson that is learned slowly and reluctantly: after the defeat of Morgoth at the end of the First Age "'the Elves deemed that evil was ended for ever, and it was not so'" (I, p.256). Yet the awareness that "'Always after a defeat and a respite, the Shadow takes another shape and grows again'" (I, p.60) is essential to an understanding of the (fallen) world's nature. A vision of ultimately dominant order and the possibility of hope is not open to Homer's heroes, who live relentlessly in the present because neither the past nor the future has any real significance to those who inhabit

a world of "human and personal tragedy built up against... a background of meaningless flux. It is all the more tragic because there hangs over the heroic world a certain futility."[8] This attitude is also evident in, for example, the Scandinavian myths of the gods and heroes who will perish at Ragnarok. In contrast, at least some of Tolkien's characters are aware that there will be a second Music after the destruction of the imperfect world, in which "the themes of Ilúvatar shall be played aright" (S, p.15). The Valar give the Elves some information on the subject (S, p.42), and Aragorn's last words express his faith in the possibility of an enduring and joyous (and presumably ordered) afterlife: "'In sorrow we must go, but not in despair. Behold! we are not bound for ever to the circles of the world, and beyond them is more than memory, Farewell!'" (III, p.344).

The works of Tolkien's immediate predecessors in fantastic romance literature, such as William Morris, Lord Dunsany and E.R. Eddison,[9] generally offer heroes of the Homeric type in Homeric situations: that is, they are primarily interested in themselves and their own desires, and they pursue goals of personal concern with little or no consideration of responsibility to anyone or anything outside their immediate sphere of interest. For example, in Morris' The Well at the World's

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8. Lewis, A Preface to "Paradise Lost", p.31.

9. George MacDonald's Phantastes and Lilith have aspects which relate them to the "Homeric" tales of Morris, Dunsany and Eddison, and yet display some concern for social relationships. The heroes Anodos and Vane, essentially solitary characters despite encounters with others, both pursue quests for personal reasons rather than a wish to benefit anyone else, and both initially have a possessive, self-willed attitude towards those outside themselves (the White Lady, the Little Ones) and wish, in effect, to make them part of the self. However, both come to feel that submission and service are preferable, placing themselves at the disposal of an authority (the knight, Mr. Raven) and the community, and wish to be assimilated into the community rather than stand outside it or be outstanding within it. The sense of an external order is much more evident in Lilith, and much more strongly related to Vane's quest.

End all four of King Peter's sons feel free to pursue their fortunes elsewhere without any thought for what will befall their country Upmeads after their father's death. This includes Ralph, who is chosen as the one to stay at home and succeed to the throne, as well as act as prop, stay and comfort to their parents. He refuses the responsibilities of this role and leaves surreptitiously, although this conduct draws no censure from anyone if only because he returns as a shining hero to rescue and preside over Upmeads after it has been invaded and disrupted. In Dunsany's The King of Elfland's Daughter Alveric does not hesitate to drop all his responsibilities and pursue Lirazel for some fifteen years, leaving Erl to the tender care of their infant son, the witch Ziroondel, and the parliament which the old king thinks has acted "'foolishly'".[10] As Orion grows up he apparently learns nothing of government and lives only for the hunt (although the exasperated complaint that "'he hunts the deer as all his forefathers hunted'"[11] refers not to a wish that the young lord would turn some attention to statecraft, but is a lament that, half Elf though he is, Orion has done nothing by "magic" to make Erl famous, thus failing in the specific duty in which his subjects had hoped he would excel). The only statement of interest in the country's welfare in the entire book is the old king's order to Alveric that he win Lirazel so that the next lord will be "magic" in compliance with the parliament's request, and the old man's reflections on this wish do not indicate a concerned ruler but an amused authority allowing the foolish people in his care to play with fire and burn their fingers. When Goldry is kidnapped in

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10. Plunkett, Edward John Moreton Drax, Lord Dunsany, The King of Elfland's Daughter (1924; rpt. New York: Ballantine Books, 1969), p.3.

11. Plunkett, The King of Elfland's Daughter, p.114.

Eddison's The Worm Ouroboros, Spitfire is dispatched back to Demonland not to look after the realm while Juss and Brandoch Daha go in hot pursuit, but to collect forces with which to seek Goldry and/or to battle Witchland. Spitfire, in accordance with his assignment, is interested in the country only when he needs help to repel the invaders. While Juss and Brandoch Daha frequently long for Demonland, they are gripped by the throes of nostalgia rather than the remembrance of responsibility, and show no concern for those whom they are supposed to guard and guide. The Zimiamvian trilogy deals with jostlings for political power, but it is seen in the relationships between the leading individuals, rather than in connection with the people or countries which are the bone of contention. Mezentius' statement to Rosma of his determination about the fate of his empire after his death is singularly unconcerned with the welfare of his subjects: "'When I die, the best man shall have the Kingdom. If that be Styllis, by proof of his abilities, good. But upon no other condition. I made this Triple Kingdom: alone, I made it: and out of worse confusion and unhandsomeness than of civil wars. It is mine to order and dispose of how I will. And I will to dispose of it into the hand of no man save into his only who shall be able to take it, and wield it, and govern it.'"[12] The inevitable result is conspiracy and assassination, and Barganax (who, whatever his abilities, comes to power at least partly because he is the only possible heir of Mezentius after Styllis and Antiope

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12. Eric Rücker Eddison, The Mezentian Gate (London: Pan/Ballantine, 1972), p.229. In the "Letter of Introduction" (p.xi), Eddison explains that Zimiamvia is a world "devised for Her Lover by Aphrodite, for whom... all worlds are made", a statement which is reinforced by the theme of "ça m'amuse" which dominates A Fish Dinner in Memison and is encapsulated by Aphrodite's casual destruction of "our" world. Since all the central characters are "dresses" of a god and a goddess, their indifference and irresponsibility are perhaps not surprising.

have been killed in the confused power struggle) wins the throne only after a civil war has been quelled. He (and Lessingham) participate in the quarrel for their own ambitious ends. Barganax and the Vicar each believes that he is the man most fitted to rule, and each wishes to occupy the throne not to use his ability on behalf of the hapless populace, but because he considers the throne to be his just due. All of these characters, heroes of the Homeric type, are motivated by an interest in matters which concern them personally, rather than a feeling of responsibility towards other people or towards a cause such as peace or order for its own sake. They do not consciously acknowledge or consider themselves to be the agents of something beyond or outside themselves.

Besides Tolkien, two other authors of modern fantasy, his contemporaries and associates Charles Williams and C.S. Lewis, adopt, in their writings, an attitude different from that expressed in the works of Morris, Dunsany and Eddison. The theme of outwardly directed responsibility, both to other people and to the concept of order, is dominant in the stories of Tolkien, Williams and Lewis. In Williams' seven novels it is made plain that he regards every aspect and detail of the ordinary world as a manifestation of an over-ruling order controlled by God, even if this is not always evident to its inhabitants (just as Middle-earth is informed by order in all its parts even if people like the Hobbits are unaware of both Eru and his designs). This is seen, for example, in The Greater Trumps, where Nancy has a vision of a policeman as a representative of order:

> ...whether indeed something common to Emperor and Khalif, cadi and magistrate, praetor and alcalde, lictor and constable, shone before her in those lights - whichever was true, it was certainly true

> that for a moment she saw in that heavy official barring their way the Emperor of the Trumps, as if Charlemagne, or one like him, stretched out his controlling sword over the tribes of Europe pouring from the forests and bade them pause or march as he would. The great roads ran below him, to Rome, to Paris, to Aix, to Byzantium, and the nations established themselves in cities upon them. The noise of all the pausing street came to her as the roar of many peoples; the white cloak held them by a gesture; order and law were there. It moved, it fell aside, the torrent of obedient movement rolled on, and they with it. 13

In All Hallows' Eve Lester has a vision of the past, present and future London, "all very greatly ordered",[14] in which even the waste of the river has a proper place as it is part of the whole: "The evacuations of the City had their place in the City; how else could the City be the City? Corruption (so to call it) was tolerable, even adequate and proper, even glorious."[15]

Williams' novels deal with the sudden eruption of "supernatural" power into the ordinary world, usually due to the incorrect use of an alien object or potential, such as the Graal or the original deck of Tarot cards, for the purposes of chaos by a character who is dissatisfied with his present place or position in the world and wishes to change it. The effect of the negative characters' actions is countered by a number of individuals, each of whom plays a particular and essential role in the struggle. For example, in Many Dimensions, it is Chloe Burnett who effects the final resolution of the conflict, but she

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13. Charles Williams, The Greater Trumps (1932; rpt. London: Faber and Faber, 1964), pp.55-56.

14. Charles Williams, All Hallows' Eve (1945; rpt. London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p.167.

15. Williams, All Hallows' Eve, p.197.

requires the support offered by Lord Arglay and Oliver Doncaster, two very different men. Chloe's personal quest is for wisdom, but she accepts the responsibility of her role as "'the Path for the Stone'"[16] by which order can be restored. The dead Lester's vision of London includes the knowledge of the importance of human contact, which, she has discovered, can exist across death: "For here citizenship meant relationship and knew it; its citizens lived new acts or lived the old at will. What on earth is only in the happiest moments of friendship or love was now normal. Lester's new friendship with Betty was but the merest flicker, but it was that flicker which now carried her soul."[17] The obligations and benefits inherent in the structure of the cosmos and in human nature as Williams perceives them is most explicitly and succinctly stated in Descent into Hell, in Peter Stanhope's explanation to Pauline Anstruther of Williams' theory of "exchange and substitution":

> "It's a fact of experience. If you give a weight to me, you can't be carrying it yourself; all I'm asking you to do is to notice that blazing truth. It doesn't sound very difficult."
>
> "And if I could," she said. "If I could do - whatever it is you mean, would I? Would I push my burden onto anybody else?"
>
> "Not if you insist on making a universe for yourself," he answered. "If you want to disobey and refuse the laws that are common to us all, if you want to live in pride and division and anger, you can. But if you will be part of the rest of us, and live and laugh and be ashamed with us, then you must be content to be helped. You must give your burden up to someone else, and you must carry someone else's burden. I haven't made the universe and it isn't my fault. But I'm sure that this is a law of the universe, and not to give up your parcel is as much to rebel as not to carry another's. You'll find it quite easy if you let yourself do it." 18

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16. Charles Williams, Many Dimensions (1931; rpt. London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p.257.

17. Williams, All Hallows' Eve, p.168.

18. Charles Williams, Descent into Hell (1937; rpt. New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1949), p.106.

Pauline is freed from the domination of her doppelgänger (self-image), while Wentworth makes the descent of the title by withdrawing from all human relationships and becoming totally isolated within himself.

Lewis, similarly, in his fictional works emphasizes the prevailing power of God's order and the necessity to be aware of it in the potential of relationships formed with "other" beings. On Mars Ransom is initially terrified and isolated. When he learns to accept the Martians he finds that he can love them despite, or because of, their "otherness": the idea of the hross as a man (like himself) is horrible, yet it is delightful as an animal. Through the Martians he learns about Maleldil and His order (although not about God and Christianity per se, since he is already a devout believer), and accepts responsibility first for the actions of Weston and Devine on their return to earth, and later for the salvation of the King and Queen of Venus. It is during the second "assignment" that Ransom becomes fully aware of his actions as a representative, not only of humanity, but of Maleldil as well: "He asked no longer 'Why me?' It might as well be he as another. It might as well be any other choice as this. The fierce light which he had seen resting on this moment of decision rested in reality on all."[19] At the same time Ransom remains important as an individual: he is a limb of Maleldil, but a particular limb, a certain unique part of the whole. Ransom's debate and his conclusion recall the scene in which Frodo asks the same question of "why me?" and receives from Gandalf the same answer at which Ransom arrives: the unknowable authority cannot be questioned, and the only possible response is humility, obedient acceptance and willing effort. Gandalf

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19. Clive Staples Lewis, Perelandra (1943 ; rpt. London: The Bodley Head, 1964), p.171.

tells Frodo: "'Such questions cannot be answered.... You may be sure that it was not for any merit that others do not possess: not for power or wisdom, at any rate. But you have been chosen, and you must therefore use such strength and heart and wits as you have'" (I, p.70).

The importance of the community with regard to the assumption of responsibility towards order is made more explicit in That Hideous Strength and the Narnia series. Every member of the community at St. Anne's has a particular function: Ransom as the leader, Jane as the dreamer and prophetess, Grace Ironwood as the doctor, MacPhee as the "realist." The agents of chaos are also specialized, but the emphasis is on the unimportance of individuality and the power of the group or "inner ring", in which the faces change without remark because they are anonymous. The N.I.C.E. is destroyed in an appropriately chaotic upheaval through the agency of unified individual action, that is, by the humans and animals under the direction of Ransom (and Maleldil), and by the unification of the planetary powers in the person of Merlin. The restoration of order is indicated by the re-joining which takes place between the animal and human couples who had been separated by the actions of the N.I.C.E., and by Ransom's translation from earth to Perelandra, the place where he really belongs. In the Narnia series heroes always act in groups: Digory and Polly, the four Pevensie children, Eustace and Jill. Caspian flees alone from his wicked uncle but is aided by three Old Narnians when he is injured near their cave, and soon gathers an army. Eustace as a dragon feels alone for the first time in his life, and realizes the value of others: it is the beginning of his reformation. Because of the diversity of the beings who live in Narnia Lewis is able to demonstrate that each has his particular talent and worth: moles dig well, Dwarfs are good craftsmen,

humans are meant to rule. Those who insist upon isolation and self-sufficiency - Uncle Andrew, Jadis, Nikabrik in his determination to stick to "his own kind" - and refuse to act as a part of Aslan's creation, are overwhelmed by it. Robley Evans' comment can apply: "The individual finds a responsible place for himself in his society; those who live outside society are identified with tyranny and self-destruction.... the individual finds true freedom in the service of good, and that good can be social, providing security and purpose for others without being destructive of singularity and wilfullness."[20] It is through inter-dependence and co-operation that Aslan's order is made evident: the dead Aslan "looked more like himself"[21] after Susan, Lucy and the mice, working together, have removed the ropes from his body. In his other novel, Till We Have Faces, Lewis depicts the love of Orual for her sister Psyche, which, although sincere, is also selfish. Orual resents, to some extent, the affection Psyche has for anyone else, and, after losing her, must learn to appreciate more fully the value of others. Moreover, she loves Psyche as an extension of Orual, her "child" and "creation", rather than Psyche as herself. The main part of the book is Orual's demand for coherence, for the gods to justify themselves, the world, and the events of her life. She finds the justification in submission rather than defiance, in an acknowledgment of unity rather than the isolation which has been central to her life.

In summary, in the works of Tolkien, Williams and Lewis the tradition that the hero represents a group is continued, but the relationship

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20. Robley Evans, J.R.R. Tolkien (New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1972), p.201.

21. Clive Staples Lewis, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (1950; rpt. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1958), p.147.

between the representative and what he represents is emphasized and made more explicit. That the Company of the Ring, or the group at the Lees' country house (in The Greater Trumps), or the group at St. Anne's, represent the world community, is evident in the fact that they are communities and function as communities. There is a leader and followers, each with a particular and essential role. The separate members see themselves as responsible not only to each other and to themselves, but to those whom they represent (that is, the world community): they assert themselves (as do traditional heroes) and yet submit to the claims of beings or concepts apart from themselves. Moreover, because of the strong sense of tradition and history demonstrated through recitals and rituals, which pervades the works of Tolkien, Williams and Lewis, the reader becomes aware of the community's relation to the cosmos and its laws, and of its responsibility to the past and future. The representative community works for order, and its efforts are seen as part of an old, ongoing struggle proceeding from past events and having an effect on the future. The community, by following the rites and patterns established in the past, can realize and restore or reinforce a coherence in the cosmos and in history. The traditional role of the mythic hero is demonstrated, rather than implied.

It is noticeable that the fairy-stories or fantasies produced during the past quarter-century tend to handle the themes of personal and cosmic order, individual and social roles, duty towards self and duty towards others, in ways similar to those used by Williams, Lewis

and Tolkien.[22] T.H. White's re-telling of the Arthurian cycle explicitly makes Arthur a conscious agent of order ("Right"), trained for the role by Merlyn. The King, in turn, develops the Round Table to "'harness Might so that it works for Right'".[23] He tries to teach his knights to think of themselves as units of the whole (the Table) and to be guided by a feeling of responsibility towards others and "Right". The Quest for the Holy Grail is undertaken because Arthur is so successful in his task that the world order is brought as near to perfection, on the surface, as possible, so the only outlet for "Might" is the pursuit of a part of the divine order which is physically present in the secular world. The community of the Table is fragmented, and order dissolves into chaos when the two central agents, Arthur and Lancelot, lose control of it because of their personal desires, but White closes all three books - The Sword in the Stone, The Once and Future King, and The Book of Merlyn - with a reference to the possibility of order and communal harmony.

There are other fantasy writers of the 1960's and 1970's who emphasize the theme of order and its elements which is central to

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22. Mervyn Peake's Gormenhast trilogy - Titus Groan, Gormenghast, Titus Alone - is different from the other books under discussion in its emphasis on solitude and its attitude towards order and responsibility. Gormenghast is a community self-isolated even from the Outer Dwellings and the surrounding countryside, and within the castle each individual is also self-isolated and absorbed in personal concerns. They are bound together only by the order imposed upon them by the rituals of the earldom. Titus, destined to sum up the community in his role as Earl and administer the order, rebels against it, but finds the outside world chaotic and his own life in a turmoil because he has turned against the basis for his identity. He is consequently unable to form any significant and lasting relationship with anyone, as the title of the last book indicates. The highly unconvincing ending of Titus Alone tries to convey the impression that his inner doubts are now resolved and he will be able to order his life coherently because he has been reassured about his own identity, but the entire weight of the book is against this conclusion.

23. Terence Hanbury White, The Once and Future King (1958; rpt. London: Fontana Books, 1968), p.244.

Tolkien and his contemporaries. Ursula Le Guin's Earthsea trilogy - A Wizard of Earthsea, The Tombs of Atuan, The Farthest Shore - proposes a world built on the principle of individuality within unity, the true name of every being and component of the world being "'syllables of the great word that is very slowly spoken by the shining of the stars. There is no other power. No other name.'"[24] The use and control of magic is taught in a school, and directed towards the service of others and the maintenance of Equilibrium. It is in the context of a servant to another person, to a small community, and ultimately to the entire world, that the hero Ged is portrayed (the similarity to White's idea of "Might" and "Right" is obvious, although there is no reason to suppose that Le Guin's concept is not independent). Ged is depicted as being to some degree a solitary agent due to his character, upbringing, power, and, eventually, position as Archmage. However, on each of the three major quests that he undertakes, he is joined by a companion who proves to be essential for the achievement of the desired goal. Lloyd Alexander's series of children's books - The Book of Three, The Black Cauldron, The Castle of Llyr, Taran Wanderer, The High King - shows the central hero's quest for his identity within the context of a core community of friends, each of whom represents a particular group or kind of people. The hero's personal quest is a major part of the eventually united effort to order the mortal world and defeat the central embodiments of disorder, and at the successful conclusion he assumes responsibility for "this" world instead of accepting a place and immortality in the Summer Country (virtually Faërie). Peter S. Beagle's The Last Unicorn tells of the unicorn's quest for her lost people, whose

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24. Ursula Kroeber Le Guin, A Wizard of Earthsea (New York: Ace Books, 1968), p.185.

imprisonment by the tyrant of a barren land has impoverished the world, and whose release signals a (limited) restoration of order. Unicorns are represented as solitary creatures, but the success of her quest depends upon the relationships she forms with two travelling companions and the hero-prince. In Beagle's A Fine and Private Place the grave is no such thing, and the existences of the characters are shaped by the contacts they make during life and death and the implications which they draw from the development of events. Katherine Kurtz, in the five "Deryni Chronicles" (Deryni Rising, Deryni Checkmate, High Deryni, Camber of Culdi, Saint Camber), uses, like Alexander, an alternative mythical-historical Wales inhabited by human beings and a magical race, the Deryni, who in some ways resemble the Faërie beings of Celtic tradition. Kurtz postulates a medieval social order and a world order based on a version of the Catholic church, both of which are believed to be threatened by the alien Deryni. The development of the conflict (in the first three books) is traced through a group of "good" characters centred around a general, a priest and their king (the figure who unites the secular and the spiritual), all of whom are half human and half Deryni, and who feel themselves to be the only force capable of holding back total chaos. In the two Camber books, the title character acts, with members of his family and friends, to dethrone a usurping king, restore the rightful monarch and ensure that the new reign signals the end of tyrannical chaos and the beginning of a peaceful, ordered period of the realm's history. Patricia A. McKillip, in The Forgotten Beasts of Eld and her trilogy about Morgon the Star-Bearer, offers worlds which are, like Le Guin's Earthsea, based on the power of names. The heroine of Beasts, originally a solitary figure, is inexorably moved into human society through a series of contacts which pull her out of

her isolation. Originally confident of her own identity, she eventually finds that she can discover herself only through contact with others, towards whom she is forced to learn responsibility after plotting a war for her own purposes. The world developed in the trilogy is more complex. McKillip extends the sympathetic realm-ruler relationship outlined by people such as James Frazer and Jessie Weston[25] to its logical conclusion, combined with the potential of the four "elements" wind, earth, fire and water, and sets up a situation where the harmony between the components of the world, held in balance by a being known as the High One, is threatened by unbound chaotic forces. The power of names being connected with the identity of what is named, it is Morgon's quest for his name and the identity which goes with the name on which the fate of the world ultimately rests. Morgon, forced to acknowledge his responsibility to his world, reluctantly pursues his quest guided by the strictures of riddle-mastery. He seems to be a solitary hero, but the end of the quest establishes "that something he had searched for so long and so hopelessly had never, even in his most desperate moments, been far from his side",[26] and that he can defeat chaos only by uniting within himself the power of everyone and everything he has met during his quest. Stephen Donaldson, in his "Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, the Unbeliever", and Terry Brooks, in The Sword of Shannara, are two writers who have obviously been much influenced by Tolkien. Each has a reluctant central hero who discovers that he must travel with a company made up of representatives of

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25. See James George Frazer, The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1890), and Jessie Laidlay Weston, From Ritual to Romance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920).

26. Patricia A. McKillip, Harpist in the Wind (London: Futura Publications, 1979), p.208. The other two books of the trilogy are The Riddle-Master of Hed and Heir of Sea and Fire.

different races and/or communities in a quest for an object which must be recovered or destroyed if the forces of chaos are to be prevented from overwhelming the ordered world.

After Morris, Dunsany, Eddison and other similar authors, it remained for writers such as Williams, Lewis, Tolkien and later authors to combine the interests of individuality and community, personal freedom and over-ruling order. Williams, Lewis and Tolkien, all having strong affinities to traditionalism, ritual and hierarchy which define the society, to the romantic tradition which defines the individual, and to organized religion defining the relationships of both state and individual to each other and to the cosmos, show in their works how a person can hold a place in a well-defined society without being stifled or made anonymous within it, and can also contribute to the society as an individual, thus benefitting himself, his fellow citizens, and the cause of order. By allowing himself to be guided by the historical patterns which established his society, the individual can relate both to the past and the present and through an awareness of the order implicit in the patterns, find a meaning in his own life and in the world. Immediate social order can be illustrated as the relationship between the leader (order within the individual) and his followers (order embodied by a group), while cosmic order can be illustrated as the relationship between the individual and the society, both represented by the hero-leader, with history (or "myth"). Because the only "realism" requirement in avowedly non-realistic literature, such as myth or fairy-story, is that it contain some factor or element which will connect the story to "human interest",[27] it is therefore

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27. Cf. Douglass Parker, "Hwaet We Holbytla...", Hudson Review, 9 (Winter 1956-57) 598-609, for some comments on this point with reference to Tolkien.

possible for the writers of such literature to establish secondary worlds in which a coherent, comprehensible order is much more evident and pervasive than it is in the primary world.

Tolkien (or Lewis or Williams) cannot, of course, be held to be solely responsible for the shift in thematic emphasis which appears between the works of writers such as Morris, Dunsany and Eddison, and the writers of the past quarter-century. Obviously other factors, including changing audience taste and expectation, have an important role in the production of a story. However, at the same time, it is possible to discern the influence of Tolkien, particularly in Donaldson and Brooks, and less obviously in others such as Alexander and McKillip. Certainly it is unlikely that any writer attempting to succeed as an author of fantasy would not be familiar with Tolkien: Andre Norton points out that "Tolkien's Middle Earth is now so deeply embedded in our realm that his name need only be mentioned to provide a mountain-tall standard against which other works will be measured perhaps for generations to come."[28]

Tolkien's avowed aim in making his secondary world was "to create a mythology for England."[29] As he put it,

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28. Andre Norton, "On Writing Fantasy" in The Many Worlds of Andre Norton, ed. Roger Elmwood (Radno: Chilton Book Co., 1974), pp.64-65. It is noticeable that books such as Frank Herbert's Dune trilogy (Dune, Dune Messiah and Children of Dune) and the Donaldson trilogy (Lord Foul's Bane, The Illearth War and The Power That Preserves) are often compared to Tolkien (as quoted on the covers of the editions cited in the bibliography) in such a way that it is evident the latter's works are being used as a standard.

29. Humphrey Carpenter, J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1977), p.89. Hereafter cited as Carpenter.

> I had a mind to make a body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic to the level of romantic fairy-story - the larger founded on the lesser in contact with the earth, the lesser drawing splendour from the vast backcloths - which I could dedicate simply: to England; to my country. It should possess the tone and quality that I desired, somewhat cool and clear, be redolent of our "air"..., and, while possessing...the fair elusive beauty that some call Celtic..., it should be "high", purged of the gross, and fit for the more adult mind of a land long steeped in poetry. I would draw some of the great tales in fullness, and leave many only placed in the scheme, and sketched. The cycles should be linked to a majestic whole, and yet leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama. 30

In other words, Tolkien wished to offer an English interpretation about existence which would explain why the world is as it is, and so make sense of it by finding in it (or imposing upon it) an order, which is the purpose of mythology. Given his belief that the artist was allowed certain flashes of the"underlying reality or truth" (OFS, p.62) by God, which he was obliged to communicate (or try to communicate) to others, and his concern with order, tradition, ritual and pattern, Tolkien (and Williams and Lewis) regarded the artist's "business" seriously.[31] In terms of this attitude, the difference between Tolkien's presentation (and those of Williams and Lewis) of the order-disorder conflict and

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30. Quoted by Carpenter, pp.89-90.

31. This attitude towards the artist's relationship with God is not invalidated by such statements as Tolkien's assertion that "'I just write for my own amusement'" (quoted in "Tolkien Talking", Sunday Times (27 November 1966), p.9), and the fact that one of Williams' reasons for writing his novels was the prospect of making money from them (as discussed by Humphrey Carpenter, The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, and their Friends (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1978), p.95). These two motivations can be considered to be of secondary rather than primary importance (at least after the writers' beliefs concerning the artist's relationship with the deity had been developed and articulated). Williams' "pot-boilers" (his five historical biographies) were more singly directed by financial considerations. See The Inklings, pp.93-98 and 108-10 for Carpenter's discussion of the subject.

the depiction of the same subject prevalent in previous mythologies and fairy-stories is explainable. Rather than being a mere diversion, the writing of fairy-stories and the making of other art is, as a revelation of God's truth, the artist's life work. It was as his real life work that Tolkien came to regard his fictional writings.[32] Considering the importance which Tolkien placed upon order in the primary world and his emphatic belief that it originated with the Creator and will eventually be shown as triumphant, it is appropriate that, as a sub-creator, he made order such a central and yet all-pervasive aspect of his secondary world.

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32. See Carpenter, pp.95 and 239.

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ADDENDA

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